

# *The Journal of a Country Woman*



*Emma Winner Rogers*



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### THE WOOD LOT

"SMALL AS THE WOOD LOT IS, THERE IS POETRY AND PEACE IN IT, AND I COME ALMOST DAILY TO GET THE REFRESHMENT OF IT. THIS WAS MY FAVORITE SPOT IN THE SUMMERS OF MY CHILDHOOD, AND ITS CHARM AND MYSTERY LINGER STILL"

# THE JOURNAL OF A COUNTRY WOMAN

BY  
EMMA WINNER ROGERS



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To  
Henry Wade Rogers



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## FOREWORD

THE delight of living near to nature, among green and growing things, sunrise and sunset within our horizon, is an end sufficient in itself. There is an added happiness and value in the founding of a country home which shall pass from generation to generation of our successors. It must appeal to thoughtful men and women now that the search for physical and mental health has become a nation's business.

The restlessness of the average family, moving from house to house or apartment to apartment, always dissatisfied but ever hopeful of better and healthier environment, is proof of the need of a permanent foothold in the country as the abiding place of the family, where all goings forth "to see life," as Bunty's brother puts it, may end happily and safely.

While the world revolves we can never escape toil and trouble, cares and fears, but we can get strong and free and joyful in the country, ready to bear our burdens with smiling faces and steady nerves. With our children, our friends, our dogs, our kindly domestic animals, and our household treasures about us we can grow into

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the likeness of the ideal man and help on the material and moral welfare of the race.

I am indebted for several of the photographs to Mr. George Taylor, Miss Matilda L. Haring, and Mrs. Tallman, all neighbors of the Old Homestead and descendants of the earliest settlers.

E. W. R.

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Allons! Whoever you are, come travel with me!

Traveling with me you find what never tires.

The earth never tires,

The earth is rude, silent, incomprehensible at first;

Nature is incomprehensible at first.

Be not discouraged; keep on; there are divine things  
well enveloped,

swear to you there are divine things more beautiful  
than words can tell.

—*Whitman.*

MARCH FIRST. If I were to the manner born, keeping a journal would never occur to me, I suppose, for all these brimming country days would be second nature and not take hold as they do of my inner consciousness and photograph themselves there as red-letter days, too fair to be forgotten. No, I belong to that increasing company who are the country's by adoption, and have come back to it after a few generations of tasting the fruit outside the Garden of Eden. To tell the truth, getting back has been pretty nearly as hard as if real cherubim with real flaming swords—whatever they may be—stood on guard to prevent a return. The true tug of war is that one realizes so fully—at least I do—the tremendous allurements of the city, the joy of its constant human fellowship and coöperation, the stimulus of all

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the spiritual and intellectual forces of the city. Multitudes in the country are continually responding to this appeal and to the city's more material attractions, and leaving the country, until where we have come, as in every real country neighborhood, the signs are unmistakable of the countryside missing its native fostering children.

I remember Lester F. Ward said a few years ago about this ruralization of the city populations and urbanization of the country populations that both were due to the general fact that rural conditions can only be appreciated through culture, while in the present state of society, culture can only be acquired at centers of population. He would admit, of course, how everything has wrought in the past few years to stimulate and broaden country life, how closely it has come into touch with the city's progressive life, and the city with the country's boundless gifts of health and beauty and wisdom. Yet his words are not so far from the truth even now. The country dweller seeks the keener life and fuller opportunities of the town by a law as instinctive as that which draws the overstimulated urbanite to an atmosphere where he can invite his soul and renew his relations with nature and with animal life.

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Perhaps the sound and sane way of life is the old-world one of making the real home, the permanent family home, in the country, and going to the town a few weeks or months of the year. This has always had followers here among those having an opportunity of choice.

I was not venturesome enough to cut myself off completely from the complex life that is second nature to me. I hear people talk of burning their bridges behind them, and it has its advantages, but I am not made up on that plan. I am no "plunger," to use a board of trade euphemism. I like to see my way out—or perhaps I ought to say more justly, I want the earth—the joy and health and loveliness of the blessed country, and a little share in the city's inspirations and intimate fellowships. I have simply turned about my usual method of life and shall live the greater part of the year in the country, making it a permanent home, and if the work and the animals permit, shall stay in town two or three months in mid-winter.

The things I wanted to do and never found time for I mean to do now, and one of them is to keep a journal of events and impressions of daily life, a little record of the passing show we call living; and living is so real and vital in the

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country! We are in touch with elemental things. Brief, bare record of events I tried to keep, but there are long intervals when life was fullest that are all blank pages. To keep a calendar of engagements, and the household accounts tolerably straight, was nearly all that swift-flying time permitted in the day's work. Here there is time for an occasional peaceful hour in which to put down in this journal something about our daily living and thinking in this new environment. Country days are so much longer than elsewhere. My frequent sojourns there had impressed this upon me, and it was one of the many reasons why I came "back to the soil." I can't explain the marvel of it, but just take it blissfully. I have come where being is more than knowing, and I enjoy my limitations. I rise in good season, but the sun is already rejoicing on its way, and the four-o'clock bird chorus is over and done. The trees are discoursing gently with the morning breeze when I go out of doors. The cows have been in the pasture long enough to be now only browsing calmly or standing, mild-eyed, chewing their cud and gazing on the green loveliness of the morning. After breakfast is over and I have been at work indoors and out a long time, I glance at the clock to satisfy my conscience

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in quitting work now, and lo! it is only ten o'clock! Two long beautiful hours yet to noon. And afternoon seems like a lifetime to be lived through.

Hurried and harried by the rushing days of the city, here I hug myself in the huge content that life is long, that there is plenty of time and I shall catch up with myself and feel the ease and restfulness which one dreams of or remembers from the times of childhood.

In the town the hours are winged, as if you put out your hand to catch a flitting bird and felt his downy plumage brush your hand as he slipped away into the distance. It is noon before one's work seems well begun. Night comes down with you breathless from the effort to get tolerably through the day's work and to have a breath and sight of sunlight on the quieter streets or in the park. Dear country days—with time enough for everything, how I rejoice in the endless hours between dawn and soft darkness!

MARCH EIGHTH. We moved to the country very early, about the middle of February, for so much needed to be done in settling the home and adjusting ourselves to the new environment before the busy season really opens. The country is wonderful in winter—more solemn and

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still than in spring and summer, but there are sights and sounds in the skies and forests and fields that thrill one, and hints of spring come with the lengthening days of late winter. No matter how snowbound the lawns and meadows, or icebound the streams and ditches, the earlier dawns and longer twilights and other cheering signs sound the note of joyful anticipation to the nature lover's heart that the eternal miracle is brooding within the ancient earth and in due season will greet us in song and leaf and blossom. We sense

The infant harvest breathing soft below  
Its eider coverlet of snow.

The bare trees show their strength and grace and make poignant music with the winter winds. The dull browns and greens of the fields contrast with the brilliant skies and crisp air to make glad one's heart; or if a soft gray pall hangs over meadows and woods, it meets our rainy-day mood and emphasizes our harmony with external nature.

"Live thou in nature!" sang our people's poet, Richard Watson Gilder:

Let the hushed heart take its fill  
Of the manifold voice of the trees,  
When leafless winter crowns the hill  
And shallow waters freeze.

. . . . .



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Let not one full hour pass  
Fruitless for thee, in all its varied length;  
Take sweetness from the grass,  
Take from the storm its strength.

It was last year's winter visit to the country when a fierce February storm worked its wild will in fields and woods and orchards and on the highways, snapping off telegraph poles and great tree limbs, filling the roads with high drifted snow and hanging twig and branch with icicles, that suddenly revealed to me the necessity of living in the country and decided me to go back to the soil before I must go finally to mingle with and become a part of it.

If the storm had not settled it for me, the glory and shining beauty of the day after would inevitably have done so. That next morning was as we dream the celestial country may be. It was marvelous Nature in her wedding garments when the sun began to touch the ice-laden trees and bushes and the white beauty of the fields.

The air was crystalline, the skies clear winter morning blue, the trees weighted and broken with their burden of glinting, opalescent ice, reflecting every beam of sunlight, each twig sparkling in rainbow colors. One breathed in from that keen, untainted, sun-pierced atmosphere a new delight in mere living and breath-

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ing; a high joy mingled with praises for soul and sense to feel the divine beauty of life as a whole.

Yet I confess the storm and its sequence were but the occasion of my decision, for the thought of making a country home had been revolving in my mind a long time, growing apace and fostered by the possibility and hope of sometime getting possession of my grandfather's old homestead, so full of childhood's memories of long summer visits year after year and of outdoor delights.

It is amazing strange how our lives are influenced by haunting early memories which build themselves into our mature plans and purposes. The man of large affairs, apparently guiltless of sentiment, dreams of boyhood days in the country, of green lanes and running brooks and woods paths and resolves to live again in his boyhood happy land. The simplicity and sincerity of his country life, with its environment of natural beauty, its intimate relations with animal life, its touch of mystery from being at the source of things, stay with him as an ideal of the true life to which all his work and ambition will pay the tribute of surrender some sane day.

The child determines the man in many

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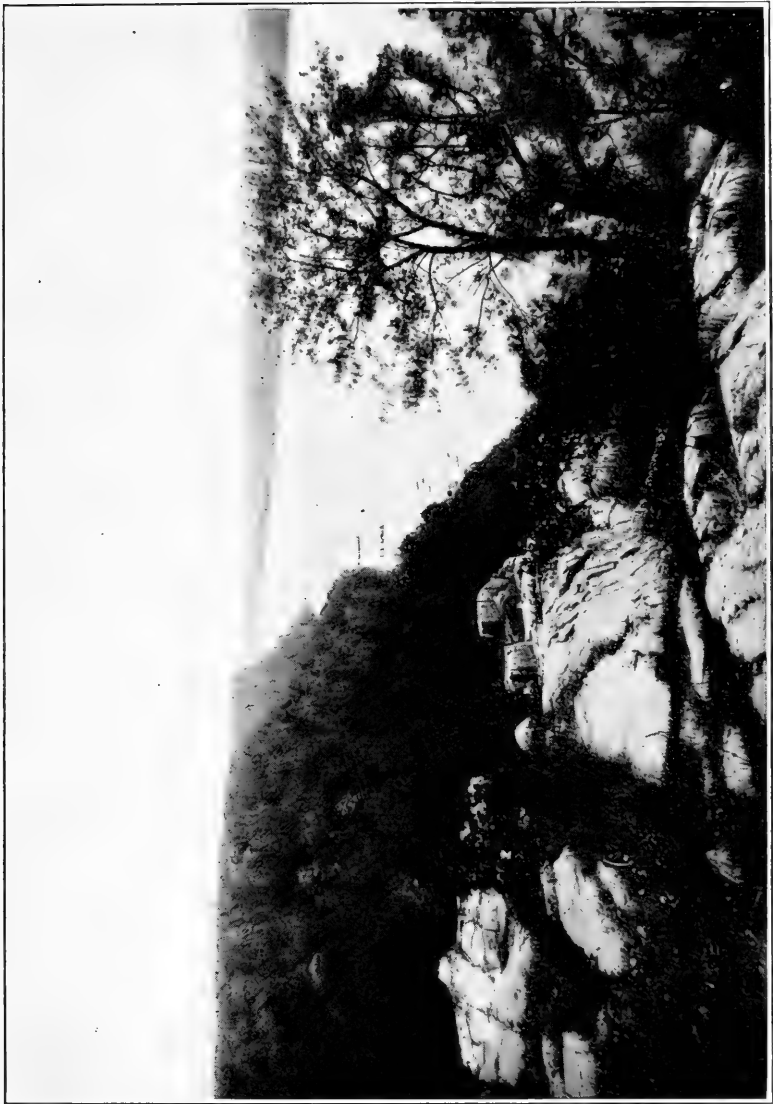
subtle ways, and it is by no chance that much of the world's creative work is done by those who have lived their early life close to nature and amid simple conditions. It is every child's right to be born and raised in the country, and failing this, to live there as much as possible during the earliest years. Other environing impressions fade or exert comparatively small leavening power, but the purling of a shallow brook over shining stones and through sedgy grasses will sing forever in his memory. The odor of newly turned sod or of the clover-scented hay in the fields will remain and stir a whole world of glad and simple memories. And the beauty and reality of a world with flowers, and trees, and birds, and green hills, and low-lying pastures with brown browsing cattle, will live on in the child and the man as voices from the kingdom of God.

Finding a country home is one of the difficulties which discourage a good many people who want to make their homes in the country for all or part of the year. Mine was ready to hand, and none of the finer country houses, larger acreages or more beautiful views or environments made me swerve a hair's breadth in my choice. I could afford to smile at the tribulations of my farm-hunting friends, at

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their disappointments and disillusionments, for my country home held all of the past for me, and all its timbers and its very soil were precious—the quaint old well, the great walnut trees on the lawn, the back brook with its wobbly bridge, the butternut tree by the front brook—yes, and all the neighborhood, with its picturesque Dutch colonial homes, its nearby unspoiled and unchanged villages, and the green side of the Palisades looming up in front.

To settle anywhere in the country hasn't half the charm or the chance of success as to have some sentimental or practical reasons for choosing a certain locality and environment. Not being farmers or gardeners by inheritance or training, the pure cultivation of the soil by greenhorns is likely to be disappointing and expensive, and the primitive conditions and comparative isolation are more than likely to be the undoing of the new country dweller. It is much the wiser to choose a region which has some associations for one, if that is possible, even if no old homestead opens its welcoming doors, or to go near where a few congenial friends have gone. Above all, it is wisdom to go with a lot of sentiment, a big supply of content, and an abiding determination to fit into the life joyfully and resourcefully.



THE GREEN SIDE OF THE PALISADES



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Everything seemed to combine finally to make my dreams of country life come true. My lord and master found his work would permit of several months of country life without let or hindrance and going back and forth in other months would not be too burdensome. The quiet of the country would be a boon to me in my own work and leave some time for me to farm besides. Then we both realized we should get enough of joy and health and length of days from the change to much more than compensate for minor inconveniences and even the surrendering of some ties and associations. Our two nieces, Amelia and Angelica, who spend much time with us, adore the country, and while they are both in college now, will be factors in making the country home festive and in sharing, too, its work and responsibilities, being girls with sensible training. I have tried to impress them with the value, not only of a sound general education, and of the minor graces and accomplishments, but also with the wisdom of fitting for definite work in the world in addition to being good housekeepers. Every girl who isn't stupid and who has proper home training can be a reasonably good housekeeper by the time she is eighteen, or before she enters college. Amelia is taking the full college course

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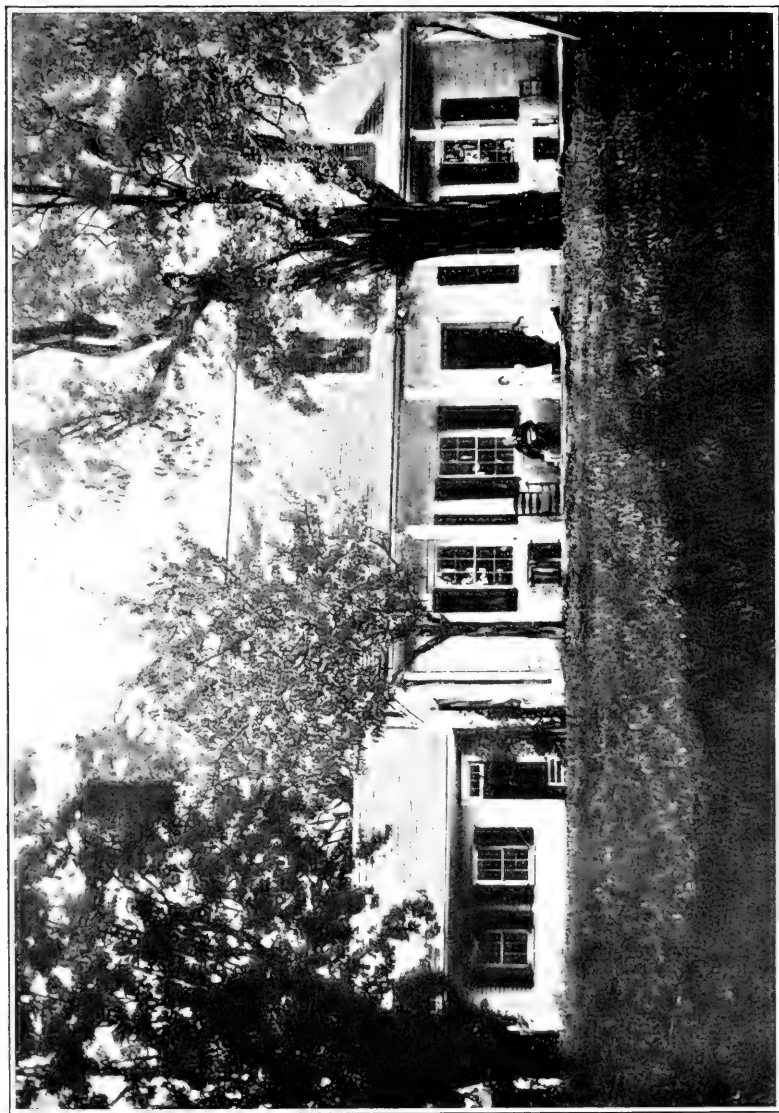
in agriculture at Cornell University, and Angelica is at Dickinson College and expects to go into Settlement work.

One of our house servants, a faithful colored man who has been with us twenty years, needed the country for health reasons and has come with us. He can't adapt himself easily to changed conditions, but time will help, and so our household is sure of not being entirely servantless. For just this is held up as the terror of country life, and we are prepared for the worst, but willing to run the risk.

The Old Homestead was the home of my maternal grandfather and is in Jersey's lovely Hudson valley, not too remote from the great city. My grandfather had lived the city life of his day, and had been drawn to make a summer home in this quiet valley by his childhood memories of it when his parents had fled there from New York during the Revolutionary War and made it a temporary home. In middle life he quitted business and city life after a successful and satisfying career and made his permanent home here to the end of his long and serene life. He had purchased "all that Messuage and Dwelling or Mansion house and three lots of land," as the old deed has it, of a descendant of one of the old Dutch settlers.







"THE OLD HOMESTEAD—WAS BUILT ABOUT 1758"

## A COUNTRY WOMAN

The tract of land of which this was a part had been granted by Governor Dongan in 1687, to Dr. George Lockhart, a London physician, and covered over three thousand acres. A few years later this great tract was sold to a group of well-to-do Dutch and Huguenot settlers, who divided it, established substantial homes and fruitful farms, and whose descendants still occupy a large part of it. If one thing in this changing world is more helpful and delightful than another, it is to see and to live among such evidences of permanence as this. The neighboring townships for miles around were all settled at the same or an earlier date by the Dutch and Huguenot colonists, to whom were patented tracts of land of from one to three thousand acres, which they divided amicably among themselves and proceeded to lay out in farms and gardens, and to build of enduring stone their comfortable Dutch colonial farmhouses. On both sides of my grandfather's place houses of just this type stand, and in the one on our right live the descendants of the fine old Dutch settler from whom he bought his "Mansion house and three lots of land."

The Old Homestead was built about 1758, and is in the Dutch Colonial style with some

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changes of later years. The first story is of stone covered with stucco, and the second of frame with overhanging roof and dormer windows. My grandfather added a wing to the house, and the old stone separate kitchen was taken down at that time, but a big brick oven was built out from the more modern kitchen, and as a child I remember seeing the bread and pies and cakes drawn out from this oven by a long-handled wooden implement not unlike the wooden snow-shovel of to-day.

The kitchen fireplace is immense; a smaller one is in the big dining room and there are great fireplaces in the sitting room and the parlor. Everything is simple, strong, and substantial, and the house is set upon a gentle rise some distance from the road, as the Dutch loved to place their homes with a sloping lawn and a large garden to the south. About twelve acres of land surround it, running back to a wood lot.

Here my grandfather founded a real home and lived a real and joyful and beneficent life. In the mountain cemetery of the nearby beautiful river village his ashes repose and my great-grandfather's, with many of their children and grandchildren.

. The inviolability of the home and the sacred-

## A COUNTRY WOMAN

ness of the family hearth-fire are among the traditions we need especially to cherish in our modern life. The vast old Dutch-tiled fireplaces in this old home seem to call me to keep the hearth-fires burning, and to-night the big back-log in the fireplace reddens with the fire-light around which the same family has gathered for a hundred years.

"In the country," writes Charles W. Eliot, "it is quite possible that a permanent family should have a permanent dwelling. To procure, keep, and transmit such a homestead is a laudable ambition." And this country life in a permanent home he names as a most important means of perpetuating good family stocks in a democracy.

MARCH TWELFTH. We are having fine sunny days and I have taken the opportunity to tramp all over the place, and make some plans about its division into fields for certain crops and to decide what needs to be done in the way of repairing fences, opening ditches, and clearing up the wood lot. A lovely wide brook runs across the entire place back from the house about two fields. There are deep, dark places in the brook, and old trees line its banks and a wagon bridge crosses it. A few trout flourish in it, and as I know the State furnishes fish for

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stocking streams, I shall apply and stock our brook. I remember catching an eel in the brook when I was about six years old, and being so scared with its weight and appearance that I handed the pole and line very unceremoniously to an older cousin, who succeeded in landing the catch.

We have had temporary outdoor help since we came to the country, but yesterday I engaged a Slav who claims to know how to farm and garden, and who looks sturdy and clean. His name is George—I can't remember the rest of it on account of the over-numerous consonants. I am to pay him twenty dollars a month and board and lodge him. There is a frame kitchen separate from the house with a good room above, and here George will be lodged. He is over forty, I should think, and has been in this country five years, leaving a wife and three half-grown children in the old country. He told me with a good deal of pride that he had sent home over eight hundred dollars to his family.

I am to be the farmer and the Slav will work under my direction, and I only hope he has the disposition and intelligence to carry out orders faithfully. I am prepared for almost anything in the way of disappointment, for

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every farmer has his tale of woe about farm labor. We shall probably need another man through the busy season, and I hope to find an intelligent young German-American who will be specially good in the care of the stock and chickens.

I believe the detailed care which women are accustomed to give to their usual work is just what is needed to bring up to a high state of cultivation the so-called worn-out farms of the East, and farming seems to me a peculiarly fitting occupation for women. It is not a new thing, either, for there have been successful women farmers and ranchers for a long time, as well as many women gardeners. I was reading recently of Henry Clay's estate at Ashland, Kentucky, of six hundred acres, and the writer said Clay's wife was the better farmer of the two and took entire charge of the estate while Clay was in public life, and showed a good profit from the raising of fine stock and the sale of butter, eggs, and poultry. The United States census of 1900 showed over three hundred thousand women farmers and gardeners, and I am sure the number has nearly doubled since, for schools and colleges in nearly every State in the Union have in the few years past been training young women as well as young men for agriculturists.

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My summer observations and experiences, with considerable reading on the subject, have prepared me fairly well to be the farmer with a reasonable chance of success. Hired farmers, as a rule, are a delusion and a snare. The really well-trained and reliable men turned out by the agricultural colleges must either go to farming for themselves or else are snapped up at high salaries by the owners of big estates, for they are not to be had by the average well-to-do farmer. So that unless one of the family can undertake the farming, and risk learning how to do it by experimenting, I would strongly advise keeping away from the country, or from ownership there. No matter whether your farm has seven or seventy acres, hiring a farmer will spoil all your comfort, eat up your profits, and cause you to beat a hasty retreat cityward. Besides all the small experiments I had known of and their failure, friends who owned large estates and went in for fancy stock and all kinds of high farming warned me never to try farming with a hired farmer at the helm. The only way if one wants some comfort and pleasure, and not too much loss in their country home investment, is to be your own farmer.

This isn't much of a farm when it comes to size, but enough to tax my knowledge and skill,



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for I am going to do intensive farming and try to bring every foot of land finally to a high state of cultivation, which for me will be more practical and profitable than to attempt half-way cultivation of a hundred acres. This plan has its good citizenship side also, for I shall be helping to solve the problem of how to furnish a more abundant food supply for the people at reasonable prices. Everywhere one hears some measure of the hard times and high prices laid to slovenly farming, to growing sixty bushels of potatoes on an acre which should produce two hundred, and it is all too true. It is true also that the farmers are generally too poor to carry out high cultivation, and alas! if they don't carry it out, they as well as the country are sure to be poorer still.

MARCH 28TH. A real March storm to-day and no promise of clearing for some time. I think of the stored-up water in the soil which this long, cold rain means, and of how it will be drunk up from below later by the rootlets of all the plants. This makes the rather dreary storm seem a cheering event after all, and it is giving me a chance to adjust myself to the new environment and new plans, and to realize the new riches of time for thought and feeling—for living indeed.

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I begin to realize, too, with some definiteness, the mental and physical stress and strain under which I had been living for so long. Yet it was a life crammed full of real work, and real pleasures and heart-warming friendships. But to achieve any definite good or usefulness in it meant a strenuousness of living not compatible with one's ideals. Most of the work seemed to lead nowhere, the pleasures were crowded in and hurried through breathlessly, and the friendships were suffering for the refreshment of renewal by leisure and thought and contact. They lived on famishingly, but seemed to say, "We would be a source of upspringing joy and inspiration were there but time."

I have a real admiration and respect for one of my city circle who said she long ago made up her mind to live for and with her friends. And she does this and is apparently a happy woman and a joy and comfort to her friends.

But not all of us could settle on something wise and delightful and say, "This one thing I do." She is unmarried and has a competence. Then she must have great singleness of purpose and force of character to choose and stick to a single purpose in life amid such a bewilderment of paths appealing to us to walk therein.

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For most of our circle the home, society, philanthropy and social reform, church life and work, and some chosen individual work or career for ourselves, all made such insistent demands in our lives that we compromised by trying to respond to all or most of these demands as well as we could, and flesh and spirit were inadequate to it.

This reminds me of an English critic's recent estimate of our American life, G. Lowes Dickinson. To soften the blow he relates it as a sort of vision appearing to him when, after seeing the wonders of Niagara and while sitting on a bench by the swift-running river, a voice repeated over and over—he could see no face—“All America is Niagara. Force without direction, noise without significance, speed without accomplishment!” Which dream, of course, needs a spiritual interpretation.

The inner circle of like-minded souls among us understand that we are in a transition stage for all highly civilized humans, and especially for womankind, who must manage and adjust the complex business of the home and social life and share largely also in the broad thought and work of the outside world.

To simplify one's life so that the best is possible, both in the making of a home and in

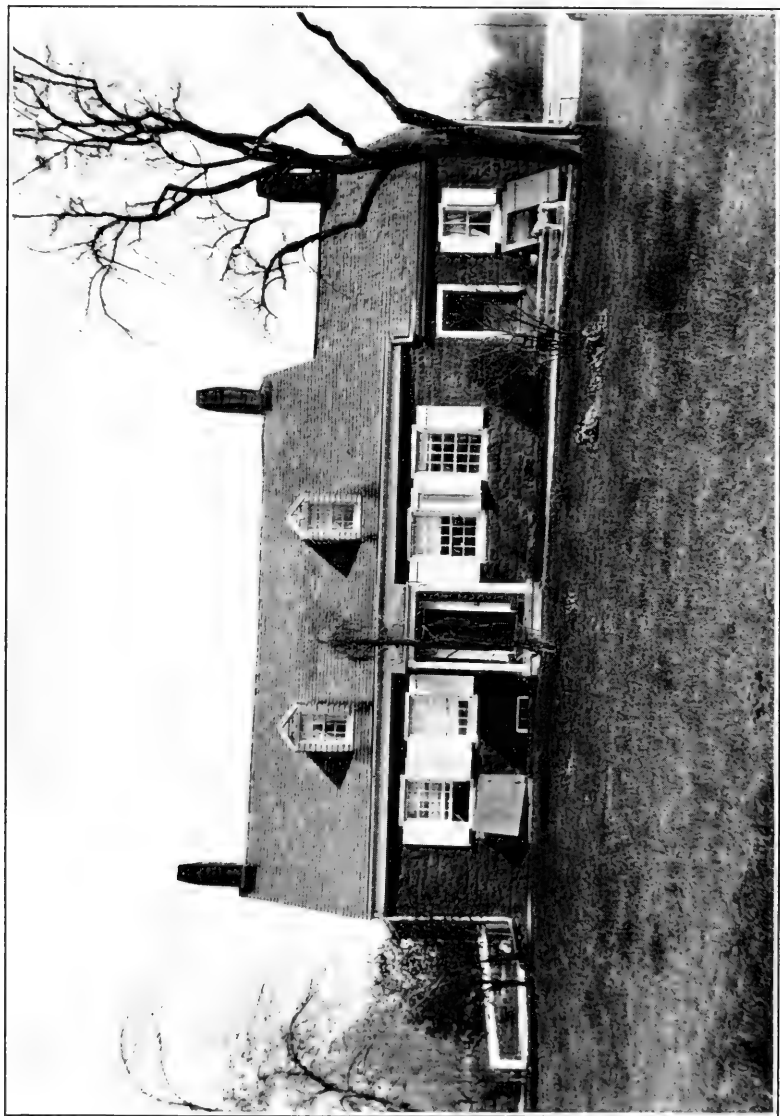
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sharing the work and uplift of the world life, is the problem we are to work out. I think it is Bliss Carmen who says, "Simplicity consists in freedom from overmuch possession," and adds: "It is not good for you to live richly in cities, because it is hard to deny yourself. . . . You must think of the luxury of freedom, so you will enter into possession of yourselves; and you will be glad and free and creative and strong."

We can do away with half the problems, so called, of modern life by going back to the country, taking with us the real gold of modern life and leaving the dross. What a brainless thing for everybody to crowd into the cities, thereby making the social and civic problems of city life, and then stay there spending much of their lives in trying to help solve them! Better lead the way back to the country and solve in this way a real part of our own and the city's problems.

APRIL FIFTH. The daffodils have poked their flat green shoots far above ground, and to my delight they are in clumps half-way down one side of the lawn as they used to be when I came here as a child. The look and odor of those daffodils stand out as clearly to me as when they bloomed afresh here. To me there is no flower more bewitching and suggestive. No





A DUTCH COLONIAL FARMHOUSE IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

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color or odor of flowers ever seems so pure and perfect. They come so early and seem so hardy and joyful, with the promise of the summer in their lovely fragrance and color. The old garden has a bed of them too and of tulips and hyacinths. The stored-up sweetness of mother earth is in the odors of these early flowers, so rich and wonderful in color and form. The blessed things do not need to be pampered like frailer flowers, but make their way up through the rich loam of old gardens in strong, swaying bunches or on old-fashioned lawns, seeming related to and harmonious with the green grass beside them.

There are no crocuses about, but I shall plant the bulbs in the best cleared part of the wood lot, and lily bulbs too. The land there is rather low and moist, and it is almost a woods garden now with quantities of ferns, native orchids, and other wonderful woods and swamp flowers. When all this region was owned by the early Dutch settlers I can fancy that their orderly gardens were gay with the blooms of fine Dutch bulbs brought or sent over from the mother country, the land of famous bulbs. And I want to have as nearly as I can what the Dutch settlers and their earliest successors had, and to live much as they did, continuing newer

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customs only where they are greatly superior to the old ones. We have given up so much in our modern hurry and worry which we should always have kept, and which people with souls are gradually getting back to.

The old garden is much as it was long ago, lying on a gentle slope toward the south. A long pathway leads down the middle to the very end, with a grape arbor over some distance of the middle of the path and borders for flowers on both sides. A great walnut tree stands in the lower left-hand corner of the garden, and as nothing would grow in the shade of this tree, we children made it one of our play spots and also a burying ground for unfortunate birds. Not far from this we had tiny gardens of our own, and there was much rivalry as to the products of these gardens.

The hotbed was in the upper left-hand corner of the garden, and there we shall have it again, and grow the plants to set out in the garden. There is a greenhouse less than two miles away, where one can go to piece out failures, and we shall doubtless need to patronize it. Wonderful rhubarb, the big kind, used to grow in the garden, and thick-stalked asparagus, peas tender and sweet as we never get them from the markets, and many other



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vegetables, besides luscious strawberries and raspberries and blackberries, and currants and gooseberries. The garden has been fairly well kept, and by setting out and renewing certain things we shall have a fine and fruitful garden after a year or two, and a very good one even this season.

The flower beds were along the front fence of the garden as borders, and the only flowers I remember in these are the old-fashioned ones, peonies, tall phlox, johnnie-jump-ups, pinks, and roses, especially a lovely moss rose. A great lilac bush grew by the garden fence on the lawn and there it is still, only taller and more spreading. Near the house were bushes of exquisite yellow roses that seemed to bloom all the summer long, and a climbing single red rose went up to the second story windows on the garden side of the house. Such roses are still found in neighboring old gardens, and I shall plant them where they used to grow. The stone walls of the north side of the house are grown over with English ivy.

I have had George the Slav plow the left side of the garden and the lower half of the right side and break up the clods with the spade and then rake it all over until the ground is smooth and the soil fine enough to rub through

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one's hands and find no big lumps. This has taken several days and was preceded by putting on a thick layer of fine barnyard manure. The success of the garden depends so much on this preliminary work. The rest will have to be spaded up, as there are many roots and plants which must not be disturbed. This part of the garden was heavily mulched in the autumn, and when the coarser mulch is raked off and the roots and berry bushes dug around, it will be in order, and as the days pass the rhubarb will be spreading its pale green, curled-up leaves on the soft ground, preparatory to shooting up big pink-lined stalks, and later the asparagus tips coming up swiftly out of the earth, the strawberry leaves putting on a brighter green, and all the bushes and roots busy day by day with the task of putting on their beautiful spring garments, and maturing blossoms and fruit. This is the part of the garden which seems almost human in its helpfulness, and gives joy and fruitage while we are toiling and moiling over the planting and tending of tiny seeds elsewhere in the garden.

APRIL FIFTEENTH. There is a lot in heredity when it comes to plant life, whatever may be the case with humans. It is economy to buy

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your garden seed from trustworthy seedsmen. I have studied the catalogues of two of the best houses and selected what I believe we can grow satisfactorily in this particular garden. I shall have it planted in long rows, instead of beds, and about eighteen inches to two feet apart, so that the hand or horse cultivator can do most of the cultivating. Otherwise it would take the whole time of one man to take care of the garden. A week ago I had George the Slav sow long rows of spinach in the mellow earth, and to-day radishes, lettuce, and early beets, and put out a row of little onion sets. Later he will plant beans, peas, and corn, and then later still will come the setting out of early cabbage, tomatoes, peppers, and cauliflower and cucumber plants which are now well started in the hotbeds. Then will come the daily endless cares of the garden, a delight as well as a task, and a task adapted to the abilities of every member of the family and warranted to renew the health of the fortunate laborers.

George the Slav might be a good deal worse than he is, and I try to bear this in mind while I watch and direct him. He has the will of a mule, and it takes tact and moral force to persuade him to do things my way rather than his own. He thinks he knows how, and pretends

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he doesn't understand my orders, but by following him up and persisting and insisting on his doing as I direct, he finally yields. He is very quick, strong, and quite thorough, so much so that there was danger of things being dug up by the roots, rather than gently spaded among; but he is learning, and if we can spend much time telling and watching him, he will do very well. He knows a good deal about farming, and has plowed and harrowed an acre of ground and sowed it to oats and cow-peas for an early fodder crop.

MAY TENTH. It is amazing and refreshing to notice the general exodus of city people to make their homes in the country. No doubt the movement is accelerated this year by the early spring and the very high cost of living in town. But the same thing has been going on for years among increasing numbers—the giving up of restricted and expensive quarters in the city and choosing a home with few or many acres in the country. The suburban movement preceded it and continues unabated. But going to the real country is infinitely more interesting, wholesome, and economical. Suburban life lacks the stimulus of city life and is generally inconvenient and expensive. It is real wisdom for the overcrowded tenement dweller to get a little

## A COUNTRY WOMAN

home in a suburb, but a country home with at least a few acres is far more satisfactory for the well-to-do city dweller.

This general movement back to the soil is not a mere fad or passing sentiment. It is a return to normal life which has been largely eclipsed in the last few decades by the mad rush for material gain, by the marvelous inventions in machinery, causing a revolution in manufacturing, through which labor was drawn out of the homes and small shops into great factories. A reaction was sure to come. This love for the soil, for nearness to nature and animal life is a too deeply rooted instinct to be permanently lost. And the new recognition of the health, long life, and serenity of soul which follows living near to nature and breathing untainted air has hastened the return to the country and renewed the interest of the wise in the pursuit of agriculture. It is a return, in a sense, to the faith of the fathers, and to their practice, too. It was Thomas Jefferson who said, "Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God, if ever he had a chosen people." And Washington went joyfully from the presidency of the United States to the retirement of his great Virginia estate with the desire to spend his remaining days there in farm-

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ing. He accepted the Presidency as a stern and necessary duty, but his expressed ambition was to be the leading farmer of America. Washington Irving says of him, "Throughout the whole existence of his career, agricultural life appears to have been his *beau ideal* of existence, which haunted his thoughts even amid the stern duties of the field, and to which he recurred with unflagging interest whenever enabled to indulge his natural bias." What an uplift in our public life it would mean if its leaders to-day had something of Washington's poise, serene dignity, and sound appreciation of the true relative values of things!

Those were the days when the large majority of our people lived and worked in the country. We were an agricultural people with the growing power to supply ourselves and most of the world with the chief essentials of life. For fifty years past the trend has been constantly cityward and factoryward. The growth of manufactures has not been left to develop according to need and to our superior natural advantages, but a high tariff policy against foreign manufactures has hastened us into a great manufacturing people with the working people shut up in factories, foundries, and shops, and the managers, superintendents, and capitalists in

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offices, shops, and city homes. The workers are huddled together in dreary, unsanitary tenements under the shadow of the factories and foundries, and a ceaseless tide of poverty-stricken though energetic foreigners have by millions recruited our labor class, and complicated our social problem.

We are now an amalgamated nation of "all sorts and conditions of men" from every land, and our cities are the despair of publicists. With the increasing struggle for life, and with the growth of this renewed love of nature and appreciation of the freedom and health of country life, the tide seems to be turning toward this sane and normal life. But not on the part of the people who need it most. The overcrowded tenement dweller with his big family is held by stern conditions, or often by preference, to his city environment. It is the educated, the professional and business classes which chiefly are returning to the country.

This last fact begins to complicate pretty seriously the farmers' trying problem of farm help. This is the country's problem now, how to secure an adequate supply of trained labor to cultivate the land. Science applied to farming makes a certain skill and training necessary for the farm laborer, and the lack of such help

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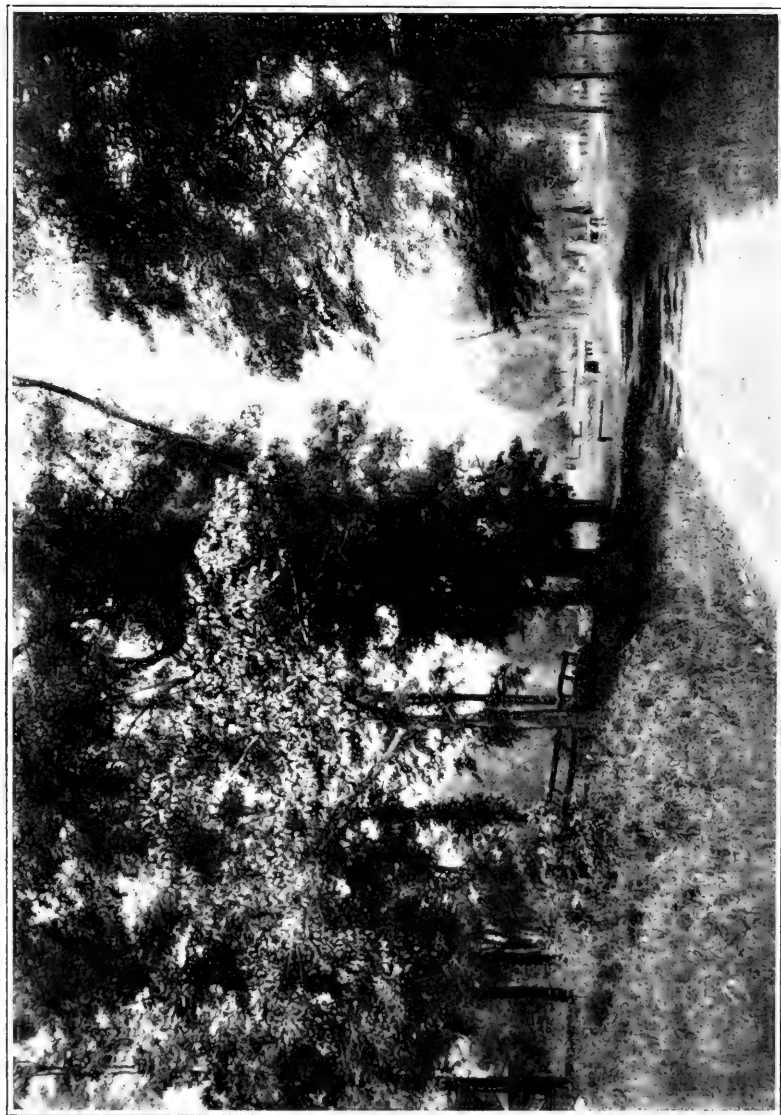
sends many farmers back to the towns discouraged.

The present high prices are credited partly to our defective agricultural conditions. Mr. James J. Hill says they are due to a shortage of farm products, and that this is caused by the lack of scientific and progressive methods of farming. Secretary of Agriculture Wilson says too many people are trying to get along without working, and there are not enough in the business of producing something; that there are not enough farmers and too many agents for the distribution of food products, and that there are too few farm laborers because of this class of men flocking to the cities. It is absolutely certain that scarcity of farm labor curtails largely the production of the farms, and that little of the labor to be had is intelligent and skillful enough for modern farming.

So we have come into a world of activity which has its own problems and needs just as the city has, and even more vital and interesting. It is highly important that intelligent people should come back to the land and help to solve some of these problems. I believe too that the great development of agricultural schools in many universities, the teaching along these lines in elementary schools, the growth of







THE ROAD TO THE STATION

## A COUNTRY WOMAN

farmers' institutes and granges, and especially the government's activity through the Department of Agriculture, will speedily help to improve conditions in the country and bring up the products per acre to somewhere near the standards of England, Holland, France, and other lands now so far ahead of us.

MAY TWENTIETH. There are charming drives in this region, and none more so than the road to the station. This is especially fortunate, for I frequently take this drive twice daily in taking my lord and master to the station and bringing him home. It is less than two miles, and is more like a natural park than a simple country road. The fences are covered for long distances with wild honeysuckle and other vines, and the air is laden with delicious fragrance. In the early morning, when we go to make the seven-thirty train, the world is indescribably lovely, the trees in their first pale green verdure, the apple blossoms making a pink and white glory in the old roadside orchards, the nearby fields so green and velvety, and the distant hills just coming out clearly from the blue mists of the early morning. And the late afternoon drive has charms of its own almost as moving.

MAY TWENTY-FIFTH. The stocking and

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equipping of even a little farm is a very important matter if success in farming is one's aim, and it is an expensive undertaking, too, in these days of soaring prices. In spite of the vogue of motor cars for both business and pleasure, the prices for horses have steadily advanced, and horses are indispensable for the farm.

I have bought a substantial team of young work horses and a good driving horse, not a fancy one. I shall indulge in no extravagances, but the essentials will cost a considerable pile of money, and it remains to be seen whether my farming and gardening will pay a reasonable interest on the cost of the plant. It is quite stirring to think about this home in the country being a business venture, and I am spurred to get up mornings at daybreak hours to speed on the good work. I am beginning to think the life here not so much less strenuous than in the city, only so much more worth while and physically stimulating.

I want a team of oxen very much, for old times' sake, and because they are such gentle, friendly creatures, and strong, moving as if there were plenty of time to live and work. But it seemed wiser to postpone indulging this desire until I was well started in farming, or

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at least until I had time to look up the practical value of these poetic creatures.

A farm wagon, station wagon, and a run-about, a plow, harrow, cream separator, small gasoline engine, harnesses, and varieties of farm and garden tools, are some of the many things I have had to buy, and every day develops a new need. Instead of "shopping," I make weekly pilgrimages to the agricultural implement store in the neighboring town and feel very much at home among the polished plows and hanging rakes and hoes, and the multitude of solid and attractive tools and machines in the big store. I am thinking of having this motto hung up in the barn: "Take care of the tools and the tools will take care of you." Farm machinery and tools are shamefully abused on the average farm; left to dry out or rust or get broken, and their usefulness sadly damaged by this carelessness, not to speak of the loss of their beauty. I have had put up by our village carpenter a model machine and tool house, after my own design, with hooks and shelves and every convenience for all the machinery and tools likely to be needed on this small place, and have made a rule that every machine must be kept in its place and every hoe, rake, spade, shovel, scythe, sickle, or any

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tool whatsoever, must be properly cleaned and hung on its own particular hook. George the Slav is not very orderly, but by repeated telling and showing he is beginning to put things in their places once in a while. Andreas, the sixteen-year-old Italian boy whom I have hired for the busy season, is a marvel of orderliness and has taken the tool house under his especial care. He will not go to bed nights until everything is in its place in the tool house and the door locked. Last night he was wandering around with his lantern trying to find a missing hoe, and finally found it on the ground in the garden where George had left it.

Buying the cows I felt was too important to trust to my own judgment, for these were to be the chief maintenance of the farm. So I commissioned the expert at the State Agricultural College to select five Jersey cows for me, two thoroughbreds, registered, and three high grades, all to be guaranteed to give thirty pounds or more of milk daily, testing five and a half per cent butter fat. These he selected in New York State on one of the great stock farms. So far the result is very satisfactory. The cows are beautiful and promise to pay for their board and make a nice profit besides. They are a continual source of interest and pleasure. Their feeding





A NEW MEMBER OF THE FAMILY



## A COUNTRY WOMAN

is a fine art in a way, with a view to keeping them slick and healthy while giving an enormous yield of rich milk. They have nice, comfortable stalls, well ventilated, plenty of salt and good water to drink, and twice a day a generous feed of corn-on-the-cob meal, gluten meal, and wheat bran, mixed and fed dry, and varied half the time with cotton-seed meal in place of gluten. Then all the "roughage" they will eat up clean, which means hay or cornstalks. We have no silo as yet, but must build one if I succeed fairly well with the little farm. A dairy farmer would say I couldn't succeed without one.

I find caring for animals is almost like caring for one's family. They need comfort and nourishing food, gentle treatment, and considerable affection and interest if they are to be at their best. Now that Princess Georgie has a fine little calf I feel that a new member of the family has arrived, and many calls and much attention has greeted the proud mother and her newborn offspring.

This is the continual miracle of the farm and the country life, nature's annual renewal of the garb of youth, and animal life bringing forth after its kind with such pride and rejoicing. Besides the sturdy little calf there are fifty downy little chicks playing about their

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white-washed coops, and answering to the clucking of their proud mothers, and half that number of fluffy, yellow ducklings waddling about their home inclosure. Then the garden is a perpetual delight and has been prolific in asparagus, spinach, and rhubarb, with the promise of a bountiful supply of good things as the season advances, and the planted fields are greened over where a few weeks ago tiny dry, gray seeds were sown in the dull-brown earth. In the country we live in the midst of miracles and there is such an inspiration for praise and thanksgiving. One seems to have come into closer contact with realities and with the Eternal Creator and renewer of life.

JUNE SECOND. The wood lot is now in its full glory and a treasure house of solitude, quiet beauty, and perennial joy. The approach to it is fairly high and dry ground, with scattered trees and a lively growth of the graceful wild carrot. As you enter its denser growths your feet must tread on countless wild flowers, and farther in it is somewhat swampy and the flowers change to bog grasses, ferns, and water-loving wild orchids and like-natured plants. Small as the wood lot is, there is poetry and peace in it, and I come almost daily to get the refreshment of it. A wonderful little glade with

## A COUNTRY WOMAN

a deep, dark spring attracts me oftenest, and as I cross the brook on the well-worn bridge and walk up the green slope and down its other side on the tree-shadowed turf to the spring a tide of charmed memories rise. For this was my favorite spot in the summers of my childhood, and its charm and mystery linger still. Then the path from the brook diverged, that to the right leading to the spring with its overhanging trees, while the other led to "the little red house," a small, deserted house which took firm hold on my childish imagination and became the center of interest.

We were never tired of entering the house by the small front door, or the back door or through the cellar, and exploring its very limited interior, and of trying to find out who had lived here and why it was forsaken. It was on the edge of the wood and near no road, but the spring and the brook and the green glade with near-by woods made it a spot to weave romances around and stir wonder in childish minds. The green slopes and the wood lot are just the same, and the spring and the brook have lost none of their charm, but the little red house is gone, and only the foundation stones and shallow cellar mark where it stood.

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I have some interesting plans for this picturesque spot, but not to be revealed now, for talking about one's dreams and plans seems to prevent their realization. The charm vanishes, and the energy to bring things to pass fails in the face of discussion and criticism. My lord and master, while the most amiable of men and a joy to live with, is yet somewhat averse to getting off the beaten track, so if I have any vagrant plans I develop them quietly, otherwise his discouraging assumption that it isn't worth while might bring them to an untimely end. If we only undertake what is really and fundamentally worth while our activities will be very limited; and then who can say beforehand what is surely worth while? I have always longed to be a Quaker and follow "the inner light." To do what the spirit moves one to do is perhaps the nearest intimation one has of the wisdom of a given way.

JUNE SEVENTH. Coming to live in the country, one of the first questions to ask oneself is, What am I going to do for the common life of the community where I hope to gain so much for myself? The country needs us far more than the city we leave, for there are fewer who can help here and harder conditions have made people more self-centered. Country life merely

## A COUNTRY WOMAN

through its comparative isolation is likely to be more self-centered. Among real country people, with the incessant industry of the life where one thing seems pressing on the heels of another to be done, neighborliness and community interests give way before the urgency of work and need on the farm itself and in the farm family of humans and animals. I had noted in my country sojourns how this narrows the life, and in a sense had seen readily enough its inevitableness. But I came to the country determined not to grow so absorbed in my own affairs as to forget my duty to my neighbor and community, and I really have no such excuse for it as the native farmer has.

The city, whether you will or no, trains its children, save the hopelessly selfish, in co-operative efforts for the common good. We leave our personal work to share in the work of betterment for the city, its schools, playgrounds, tenements, reformatories, orphanages, settlements, and a score of other helpful agencies, in one or more of which every good citizen is enrolled as a helper. Far less of such co-operative work is needed in the country, and much less time can be afforded for social and community interests, for there is no leisure class in the country. All are at work in one depart-

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ment or another of the farm factory—shall we call it? And there is no putting off gathering the harvest when it is ripe, picking the apples before the windstorm shakes them down, banking the celery in season, setting out trees or plants when the soil is right, feeding the stock and poultry daily, and a hundred other insistent duties of the country life.

The country needs the development of the human side, a broader and more stimulating social life, neighborliness, community interest, and helpfulness. And it is coming in these modern days. The true joy of living is to share in the common life and to be broadened and uplifted by it. This was the philosophy and the religion we brought with us to the country, and it will fit as well here as in the city.

Now that we are fairly settled and our rejoicings and congratulations have become more subdued, my curiosity and conscience are both awakening to the environment and what it shall mean to us and we to it. I want to know all my neighbors and many of the people in the villages nearest me, especially the people who may need me, to whom my coming and my home as a kind of social center shall mean some help and cheer, an opportunity for real





THE PALISADES AND THE RIVER



## A COUNTRY WOMAN

human relationships. In turn I need their friendship and experience.

The nearest village is almost entirely Italian, and made up of agriculturists and a few people who work in very small artificial flower and cigar factories right in the little village. The station master is an intelligent Italian, and the two or three stores and shops are conducted by them. There is a small Italian Catholic church, and a public school full of bright-eyed Italian children.

Stretching out from the village are tiny farms of a few acres each, all well cultivated and with gardens and vineyards about the little houses. It is a very interesting settlement and points a way of adopting the Italians into our civilization without herding them in the tenements of cities. This village is builded where a few years ago were only level fields and trees and underbrush.

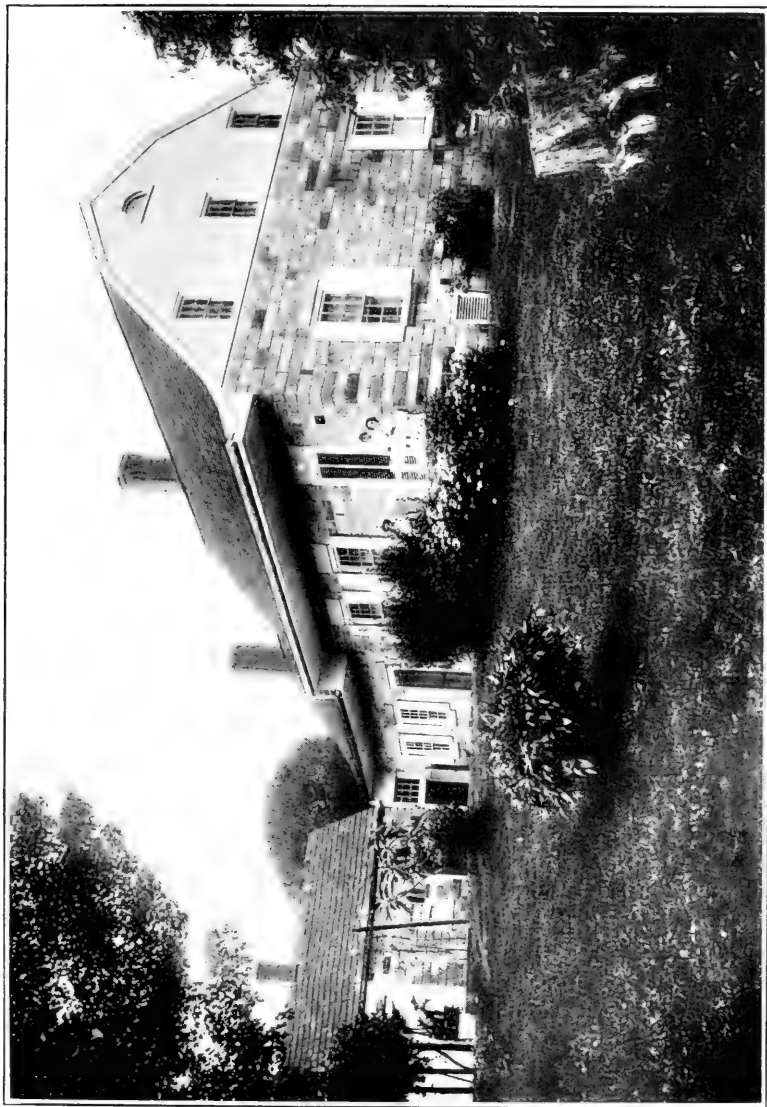
Another nearby village, and one full of pleasant childhood associations for me, is a mile and a half distant, on the winding, park-like road leading toward the Palisades and the river. This is pre-Revolutionary and very quaint, attractive, and unspoiled. Here is our post office and the village churches, one of which my grandfather built and worshiped in

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for many years. A beautiful hilly country lies all about, and among these hills are some fine estates, but much the same type of people live in the village as made their homes there of old, and that is a cause of rejoicing. It is so good to have a few unchanged spots, and here the changes have not been revolutionary, but merged into the quiet life of the people without transforming the village into a commonplace, up-to-date small town.

My immediate neighbors are the farmers living on the old places, in quaint, attractive homes where generations of their ancestors have lived and worked. Here and there German farmers or gardeners have taken the places of the old settlers, or a city family has come to the old-time region. No one is rich or anywhere near it, or likely to be, but there is an atmosphere about the places and in the few homes I have come to know that refreshes one, and speaks of peace and modest plenty, and of cheer and industry. Good roads and electric lighting and telephone service have slipped in quietly but not obtrusively, and one can go about with the feeling and realization that the magic chain with the past is not broken.

"TIME, which changes all things, is but



OUR NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOR'S HOME



## A COUNTRY WOMAN

slow in its operations upon a Dutchman's dwelling," says Washington Irving, and his alluring picture of the quaint, low-eaved farm-houses of Nieuw Nederlands has a special charm if one has seen with his own eyes some of these picturesque survivals of the olden time.

The solidity and picturesque simplicity of the Dutch colonial farmhouses account for the numerous survivals of this type of home architecture in regions where the growth of great cities has not leveled all landmarks of a former time. A restful beauty pervades these old Dutch farm and village houses, and in late years frequent copying of the best features of these homes of our forefathers evidences a reawakening of artistic feeling and a latter-day appreciation of the simple life.

I like to think of the sterling virtues of the Hollanders who brought to a new country the courage, skill, industry, and love of order and beauty which had made their own land the center of European civilization. Their descendants might well imitate the filial loyalty of the New Englander and proclaim to the world the great and important part their Dutch forefathers had in the settlement of this country and the founding of the government of the United States.

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Dutch settlement in the middle states of America occurred in the period of Holland's greatest eminence. "In every branch of human industry," says Motley, "these republicans took the lead." And Thorold Rogers claims that the success of Holland's struggle for liberty was the beginning of modern civilization—"the Dutch having taught Europe nearly everything it knows." Her merchants controlled the commerce of the world, the influence of her statesmen and scholars was worldwide, and her broad tolerance made this small country the refuge of the oppressed and the persecuted of every land. At the same time her artists were painting immortal pictures, and her artist-craftsmen fashioning in silver and gold, in wood and clay and leather and textiles the beautiful things for use and adornment that served to make the home environment of the rich and the poor artistic.

The institutions and civilization of Holland left a permanent impress upon the New World of which too little acknowledgment has been made. It is rarely that the Dutch blood in American veins is given its due share of credit for the sterling traits and æsthetic qualities of the American people. New England has wisely and zealously investigated, preserved,





OUR NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOR'S KITCHEN



## A COUNTRY WOMAN

and published to the world every trace of her colonial history from archives, historic spots, architectural remains, ancient furniture and utensils, and manners and customs, with the influences that shaped her founding, and those that went out from her in the shaping of the nation. It is only in recent years that an effort to rehabilitate the early history of the middle states has seriously begun, although Woodrow Wilson has made bold to say that "the local history of the middle states is much more structurally a part of the nation as a whole than is the history of New England or of the several states and regions of the South."

The Hollanders were the first people to make home life comfortable, as we understand it, and they brought to the New World their high ideal of home. What survivals of the early settlers and their descendants have come down to us in their houses, furniture, and utensils, and in their customs and personal belongings evidence the comfort and simplicity in which they lived, and their sense of the value of the picturesque and the beautiful in their homes and environment. They chose sightly locations for their homes, on gently sloping hill-sides, or by the waterside, with a longing thought of the mother-land, and even the

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simplest country houses were models of comfort and quaint homelikeness and excellent workmanship, as of a people long past the rude beginnings of pioneer life. The low substantial stone houses were picturesque, and into them went handwrought timbers and shingles and solid masonry. Within were immense fireplaces with Dutch hearth tiles, broad window seats, wonderful scenic wall paper, and the substantial furniture brought from Holland. The burnished metal utensils, the handwrought plate, and artistic Delft ware added the touch of brightness to the interior. The things they used in everyday life were artistic and of sound workmanship, so that to-day what survive of them is kept in museums and chief rooms and copied diligently by a generation awakening to the value of beauty in the common life.

The manor house and the larger town houses of the Dutch in America were examples of their more stately home architecture, and the interiors of these evidenced the richness of the finishing and furnishing of the time. Very few of these houses are left, the advancing tide of business and population having swept them away at a time when neither art nor historic remainders held a very high place in New World civilization. Richard Grant White says

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that "old New York has been swept out of existence by the great tidal wave of its own prosperity."

But the country regions of certain sections of the middle states have many delightful old houses built by the descendants of the first Dutch settlers, who clung to their native architecture, native customs and manners, and to their mother tongue long after the British had taken possession of the machinery of government in the Dutch colonies. We find how deeply the Hollanders had taken root in the fact that the Dutch language was used in the Dutch Reformed churches of New York until 1764, a hundred years after the English conquest, when they reluctantly adopted the prevailing tongue, but Dutch was occasionally used until forty years later. In the country districts the change to church services in English was still later. All the services in the Bergen church (now Jersey City) were in the Dutch language until 1792, and the singing continued in Dutch until 1809. The church register was kept in the same language until 1809. The charming region north of "old Bergen" and of New York on both sides of the Hudson to Albany and beyond, was dotted with Dutch settlements which preserved their

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original customs, language, and home life to the beginning of the nineteenth century. Dutch names predominate even now in large sections of this Hudson River region.

Many of the Dutch colonial farm and village houses may still be found on Long Island, and scattered houses of this type on Staten Island, and in sections of Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey mark the extent of early Dutch settlements

This region on the west shore of the Hudson, including Bergen County in New Jersey, and Rockland and Orange counties in New York, is perhaps richer than the others in well-preserved Dutch colonial farmhouses and ancient Dutch village churches. Here, too, one finds something of the old-time atmosphere, and survivals of quaint Dutch customs. The rural environment in most of this region, the comparatively homogeneous population, descendants of the early Dutch settlers, the ancient customs lingering even to the present, the time-worn gravestones and marvelous church records of two centuries and more make it possible to reconstruct in part amid these reminders a lively picture of farm life in Dutch colonial days. Some one has advised the student of architecture to go to Paris via Hackensack,

## A COUNTRY WOMAN

New Jersey, and it is certain one would carry away fair memories of fascinating old stone houses, substantial as when the stones were newly placed, and with all the simple picturesque beauty and comfort which the magic word "home" suggests.

But here and all through the Hudson valley a new civilization is covering the old one. Ancient customs linger only in remote corners, or in modern revivals to enliven festive days.

JUNE TENTH. Some reminders of the ancient household industries remain in the neighboring farmhouses, where an old loom or spinning wheel, a quilting frame or candle-molds may be found occasionally, and all of them have spreads and quilts and carpets and rugs coming down from the former days. In the Italian village a few women have the graceful arts of lace-making and embroidery, and some of the men keep their skill in carving wood and modeling. So it has seemed to me that a little center for arts and crafts in my country home may be a means of friendship and mutual helpfulness in the neighborhood as we come to know each other better.

The rooms on the right of the long hall running through the Old Homestead used

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to be known as the parlor and the back bedroom. I am now putting these to social uses and call them the studio and the crafts room; rather too ambitious names, and I may sensibly wind up by calling them the workshops.

Yesterday I had an old-time rag-carpet loom set up in the crafts room. I found it in a middle Jersey ancient village, and it fits perfectly into the low-ceiled room of my ancestral home. I learned to weave "Colonial rugs," as we call them nowadays, in anticipation of coming sometime to the country where I should have time to indulge my taste for handicrafts. It is fascinating work and uses whatever artistic gifts one has for form and color adaptations. Now I see how I can use it among a little circle of country and village women to promote farmhouse and village industries, as well as neighborhood social life. The cutting, sewing, dyeing, and weaving of materials for rugs will appeal to the women as they gain skill, and will perhaps help them earn a few extra dollars, provided we get sale for our rugs. I set up also one of the small Barbour linen looms for weaving towels and bureau covers and strips for curtains and other uses. If we really do much weaving, I can readily find old women in the villages who will no doubt cut and sew

## A COUNTRY WOMAN

beautifully the materials for the rugs, and so spread the interest and usefulness of the work. I find that hand-sewing is not a lost art in the country, and one well-lighted corner of the crafts room is for the fine art of hand-sewing, with a suitable table, and an old-time chest to hold the cloth and the garments in process of being made. Embroidery and lace-making will also have a fit place in the crafts room. This room opens into a smaller room back of it, which gives directly on a grass plat made by the angle of the house, and enclosed on two sides by the ivy-covered walls of the house. Inside and out it is delightful for work and as a social meeting place.

The studio is a long, low-studded room with an immense fireplace laid in old Dutch tiles, and with a high, narrow wood mantel above it. There are two large front windows with deep window seats and two quaint little windows, high and narrow, on the fireplace side of the room, and with the same deep window seats, being cut through eighteen inches of stone wall. Hardwood floors had to be put down, but it was with a pang of regret that I saw the broad, century-and-a-half-old, hand-hewn timbers covered up. The old timbers and flooring are sound after all the passing genera-

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tions, and tell of honest, well-seasoned lumber in our forefathers' building operations.

I have put my old brass andirons and candlesticks in the studio, and two antique mahogany oval tables which were in the house in my grandfather's time, and hung a few good pictures. The shelving on one side of the room is filled with all my books on painting and sculpture, on pottery, old china, pewter ware, old furniture, and the arts of gardening and farming. How I have longed to read these—that is, often to take a morning or evening to leaf through, read, and ruminate on the wisdom and beauty inside these attractive volumes. But the town gives you no time for such a revel in books. I have hurried through chapters here and there on subjects I needed to know about specially, but for real communion with these books I have been waiting until I got to the country.

JUNE TWELFTH. Joy! It is too good to be true. I found a pair of grand, solemn, gentle oxen last week on a little mountain-side farm, and cajoled the kindly farmer to sell them to me. He had raised them and couldn't say enough about their usefulness, their great strength, and gentleness. But if he had said they were wild, capricious, gay creatures I





BRINGING HOME OUR TEAM OF OXEN



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would have bought them just the same. They are a part of the poetry and sentiment of this region. I remember very vividly the ox-team owned by the colored preacher on the mountain, which he brought occasionally to do the heavy work here in my grandfather's time. The sense of power and peace in those gentle creatures has been a refreshing memory.

The poet Carducci, in his lines to The Ox, exquisitely expresses their characteristics and the modern feeling of the common bond between man and his faithful helpers in winning sustenance from the earth:

I love thee, gentle ox, since thou my heart  
With sense of peace and power dost mildly fill;  
Whether in free and fertile fields apart,  
Thou gazing standest, solemn, silent, still;  
Or when, content beneath the yoke to smart,  
Gravely man's task thou aidest to fulfill;  
Meeting with thy slow glance each offered ill.  
From thy wide, black and humid nostril steams  
Thy breath, and, like a hymn, resounds and dies  
Thy joyous lowing on the air serene;  
While mirrored broad and tranquil, forth there gleams  
From out the austere sweetness of thine eyes  
The meadow's silence all divine and green.

Besides being another link with the past and teaching their lesson of repose and calmness amidst strenuous work, our team of oxen will

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be very useful, doing all the heavy hauling, and many of the hard tasks of the farm. They will haul wood from the wood lot, pull out stumps, haul stones and clay, and when needed do any kind of ordinary farm work. They are easy keepers and will graze in the woods, and drink out of the brook during much of the year.

JUNE FOURTEENTH. We are getting into the longest days of the year, and how wonderful they are! It is daylight before four in the morning and the bird chorus begins with the earliest dawn. By sunrise it is over, though birds here and there are twittering and singing solos. Darkness does not settle down until eight in the evening, and one has the sensation of living more in these long, bright days than in the shorter ones.

I like to be out of doors by half-past five and drink in the dewy freshness of the early morning. It gives one a good start for the day, and it is really necessary on a farm to improve the shining hours of the summer time, the seedtime and harvest days, when everything is clamoring for care, and saying, "Tend us now or we perish." There is time for a little loafing in winter on the farm, but not in the other seasons.

But O the joy of the work! And to work

## A COUNTRY WOMAN

under such marvelous conditions and in such an environment! Unseen forces working with us, doing the lion's share, and the sky arching over us, bluer than any sea, its drifting clouds and morning and evening colors visions of beauty! The cool, scented air from which one breathes in health and vigor, the grassy fields and green trees and hedges, and blossoming shrubs and flowers, all are near as we work at the daily farm tasks. Our hearts sing with Dr. Van Dyke:

“This is the gospel of labor,  
Ring it, ye bells of the kirk.  
The Lord of Love came down from above  
To live with the men who work.  
This is the rose he planted  
Here in the thorn-cursed soil;  
Heaven is blessed with perfect rest,  
But the blessing of earth is toil.”

George the Slav is one of the break-of-day workers and never has to be called. He has fed the cows and is nearly through milking when I appear on the scene. The boy helps him put the milk through the separator and measure the cream into the cans, which stand ready for the man from the summer hotel, four miles distant, who comes at seven daily for the cream and milk. I have also engaged to supply

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eggs, poultry, and vegetables as the season progresses, and very fortunate we are to have a market at our gates. The same management owns a small city hotel and will take our farm products all the year, but we must send them to the station during the fall and winter. This is only a mile and a half distant, so it will not be difficult. The difficult part will be to have the work go on satisfactorily while we are away during three or four months of the winter. But I am not borrowing trouble, and will find a way to solve difficulties as they arise.

Distribution of products is half the battle on the farm, as it is in the rest of the world, and it is only a happy chance and the dearth of dairies, and especially of Jersey dairies, small or large, in our vicinity which gives us such a convenient market. Now the problem will be to keep the cows and chickens and garden and fields up to the mark, for some reasonable regularity of supply must be assured.

The fact that there are cows and chickens and fields and garden does not guarantee that there will be milk and cream and eggs and vegetables, at least with any regularity and continuance of quantity and quality. This is another reason why I rise early and why I plan and study and work at the problems of the little farm. Eternal

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vigilance is the price of milk and eggs and vegetables as well as of liberty, and on a farm you do not reap what you have not sown and tended and watched and worked over.

A hen seems a very guileless and manageable being to the uninitiated, and a mine of wealth in her reputed egg-producing powers, but vigorous mental and physical efforts are needed by her owner to win steady and abundant results in eggs and chickens. My sturdy Norwegian egg-man who brought me the weekly supply in the city expressed it pretty correctly when he said that only one in a hundred persons makes a success of egg raising and chicken farming.

It is simply that people have an idea that anyone can farm successfully, that things grow and produce with just ordinary day's work attention, than which there never was a greater mistake. Nature is too bountiful to be altogether defeated, and even careless and brainless culture of the soil and care of animals brings some results, but success and a generous living is in the application of intelligent, trained, and enthusiastic efforts to farming. In advising my young college friends to choose farming as a lifework—the God-ordained work for mankind—I discriminate, and advise only the specially

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bright and energetic ones to take it up, the honor men. A mediocre man may earn a scanty living in law, medicine, the ministry, or other lines, but he could hardly worry a living out of the soil. Brains, energy, and insight must go to make the successful modern farmer.

JUNE SEVENTEENTH. I am more and more impressed with what the national and State governments are doing for country life and farming. No one need lack for knowledge and the best methods in every line of agriculture, for from both these sources are continually issued the most helpful, enlightening, and advanced methods, gleaned from our own and other countries, and sent broadcast as farmers' bulletins over the whole land simply for the asking. These bulletins are practical guides based on real experiences at the various agricultural experiment stations, or by practical and progressive farmers, and are simply invaluable. I have been much helped in the planning and carrying out of my country home activities by a study of many of these farmers' bulletins, and one of them especially is my chief guide. It is Bulletin No. 242, issued by the Department of Agriculture, and called "An Example of Model Farming." It tells the story of successful farming on a fifteen-acre farm,



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where thirty head of stock are kept, seventeen of which are cows in milk, and where all the "roughage" is raised for them on the little farm. When this journal seems an improbable tale of impossible doings, I hope the reader will send for the Bulletin and find out how much less I am able to accomplish than the owner of this model farm. For although the owner of the fifteen-acre farm is a clergyman with no previous experience in farming, I am sure he must be a genius not to be approached by ordinary mortals, or else the care and culture of souls have given him the necessary training for success in the culture of land and the care of stock. I look for no such notable success as his, but by adopting his methods and with other helps from wise farmers and gardeners I hope to do fairly well. Long life, vigorous health and happiness are some of the fruits I hope to reap from my little farm, but the ordinary crops are highly essential, at least to my happiness.

By the method I am pursuing, three acres of the farm will be kept in grass to be cut for hay, three acres in corn, two of which will be allowed to mature, and the third will be cut as a green fodder crop during the summer. A half acre each is sown to rye and to mixed oats and cow-peas for fodder crops, coming on at different

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dates, so the cows and other stock will have a succession of green food from now on to the late fall, instead of pasturing. But I am saving an acre and a half, the old orchard lot, as a pasture and outdoor living room for them. In this day of outdoor living I would not have the heart to follow exactly the model farmer's plan, which is based on what the butter-making little kingdom of Denmark does, keeping the cows stabled all the year round. No, I shall keep the cows out of doors all day from May to November. I am sure they will be happier and healthier. The beautiful oxen and the horses and young calves are to go either in the wood lot or the pasture on Sundays and on many of the fine summer nights. I like to see the horses roll on the grass and get up and shake themselves and start on a brisk gallop around the field. They feel their freedom and come up to the gate presently, neighing and holding their heads over to be patted. The old orchard has eight or ten picturesque apple trees left in it, which afford delightful shade, and the broad brook in the wood lot makes that an ideal spot for the animals. The least we can do for trusting creatures who do so much for us is to give them living conditions to which they naturally belong, so far as we

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can. The green fodder is carried on the farm wagon morning and afternoon fresh cut, and thrown out to the cows in the pasture field. Besides this, in their stalls they are fed their mixed ration of grain well seasoned with salt in the early morning and evening.

I am going to try an Irish plan of winter feeding. This is to cut up and boil turnips or cabbage and thicken with corn meal or a mixed grain meal. For this I shall plant in late July a quarter acre of field turnips, and George the Slav has already set out a quarter acre of late cabbage. We also sowed some long rows of field beets, for these are valuable winter feed for cattle. This Irish ration, it seems to me, will take the place of silage very well and avoid the peculiar flavor of the milk which is often complained of in silage-fed cows. I shall need a vegetable cutter for this and it can be run by the little engine of the cream separator. And I shall have to build a root cellar, but we need that anyway to keep our winter potatoes, beets, onions, parsnips, carrots, and celery in.

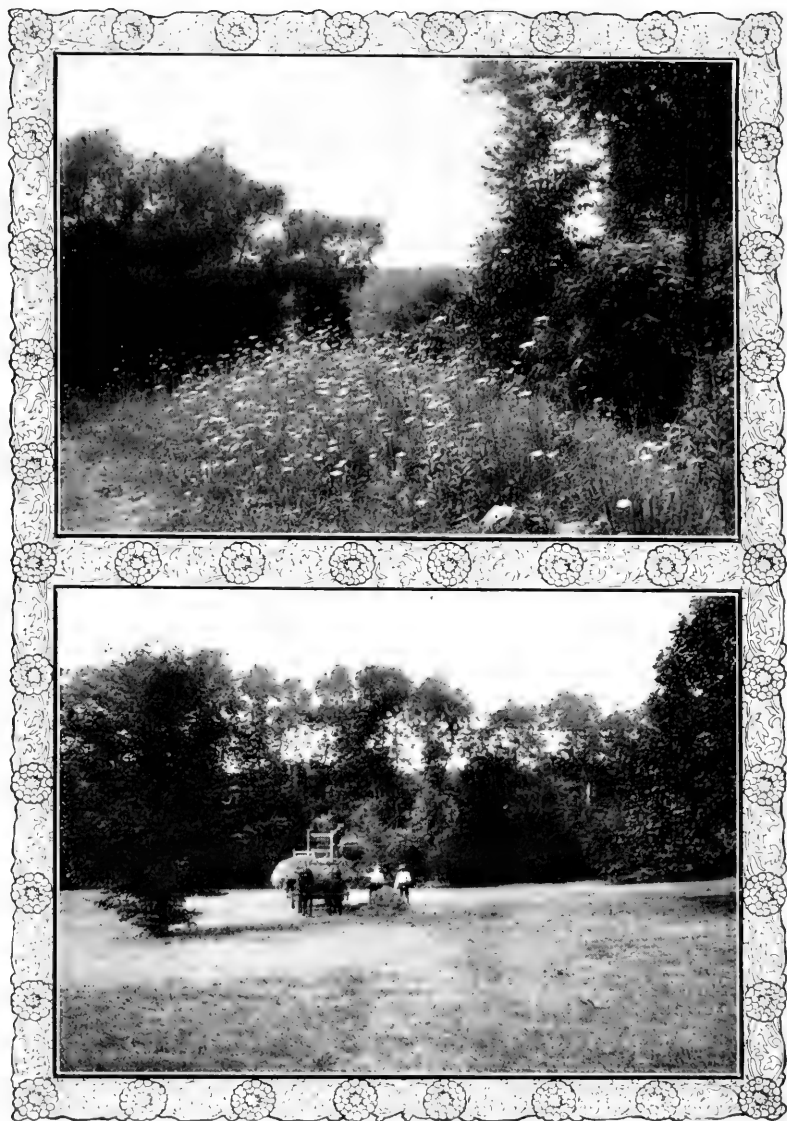
I have a treasure of an Irish girl as a cook and houseworker. She came to me two months ago, after George, my colored houseman, and I were pretty tired out with our varied labors in getting settled, doing the cooking, and taking

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care of the house, with only temporary help of workers by the day. George was not complaining, but he looked very sober, and as if he doubted the joys of country life, while with my necessary outdoor duties added to indoor ones, I was obliged to give up my daily stint of reading and writing and other accustomed if unnecessary pleasures or duties, when suddenly Rose Finnegan dawned on my vision, coming from a friendly office where I had left instructions as to my needs. The more accomplished ones declined to come to the country, but Rose, being fresh from her mother's farm in Ireland, and a little homesick after a week of bewilderment in the great city with a married cousin, was rejoiced that she could find a place in the country.

She had never lived out, but assisted her mother in the house and farm work, so she knows all about outdoor work and a little about housework. I have succeeded in teaching her to do plain cooking after our fashion, for she is very eager to learn, and her constant "Thank you, ma'ams" and exclamations of high appreciation of my ways of doing things have spurred me to a task I had always vowed not to undertake. However, Rose is no common Irish greenhorn, but a well-mannered and in-





WILD CARROTS NEAR THE WOODLOT. BRINGING IN OUR LAST LOAD OF HAY

## A COUNTRY WOMAN

telligent girl, coming from the small farmer class. She has a fair education, a rich Irish brogue, a love of work almost unbelievable, and a cheery disposition. She is trusty and interested in our welfare and determined to remain with us as long as she stays in America, which I understand is to be until she has added a considerable sum to what she calls her fortune in Ireland. I am enjoying her immensely, in spite of the burdens and mishaps incident to her training, and I feel that Providence has been kind to send me such a helper. She has no prejudices against the Negroes, as her compatriots in this country have, so that she and George the houseman sit down comfortably to their meals together and are very friendly. George the Slav and the farm boy take their meals together at much earlier hours.

JUNE TWENTY-SECOND. In the very thick of things. The harvest of hay is under way, the berry and jelly-making season is on, the garden calls daily for hours of work, in addition to the usual care for the field crops and the stock. I forgot to say we put in a half acre of potatoes, and after constant culture and daily battles with the potato bugs, they are coming on finely. For another fortnight they must have the cultivator run through them once or twice

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a week, and then they will be vigorous enough to fight their few remaining foes alone. The oxen have behaved like angels, and already show how useful as well as ornamental they can be, and all the other creatures are coöperating in the general scheme of things most beautifully. We are fairly rioting in fresh vegetables and small fruits, and sending the surplus, which isn't large this year, to our summer hotel market. The strawberries we pick carefully with inch long stems so that they may be eaten from the stem. Three or four of them make a reasonable meal.

Amelia and Angelica come home from college in a few days, and they will be two royal helpers in and out of doors. Later two or three of their college friends are coming for a week-end visit, and some of our city friends we are asking for short visits, the ones who have been obliged to stay most or all of the summer in town. We are to go on living very simply when guests are here, letting them fit into our happy and busy life, and getting refreshment and stimulus from renewed association with them.

JUNE TWENTY-NINTH. These are busy days. It is the height of the season in the country, but in a different sense from the city's "season." We are in the midst of har-



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vest. We are also in the midst of ripe and ripening strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries, currants, and cherries. Amelia and Angelica came from college a few days ago with trunks and boxes, and college banners and photographs, and each brought a girl friend for a few days' stay.

After the general rejoicing and unpacking, and a survey of the new home in the Old Homestead, we held a council of work. System and order, I find, are quite as important on the farm as in the office or shop or school, for even a small farm combines various lines of activity, as home management and work, tilling of the soil, care of stock, garden culture, and many other things. It is a factory, in a sense, where the raw material is worked over once or twice at least. More than that, the raw material is created on the farm. It is as near a case of something out of nothing as I know. From a field as bare as your hand four months ago, George the Slav and the boy have garnered into the barn several goodly loads of oats, and three or four loads of hay from the small hayfield, and two loads of rye from the low piece of land near the wood lot. These grains will shortly be threshed out with the small second-hand thresher which I have lately in-

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stalled in the barn, and then ground up for feed for the horses and cows, leaving the straw as bedding for the animals.

I have put a three-horse power engine into the barn to grind the corn and other grains and to cut the cornstalks for winter fodder. With this and the separator engine much of the work of the farm and house can be done quickly and cheaply, which formerly had to be done expensively by hand or sent to the mill at the cost of time and toll. All our wood will be sawed by power from the larger engine, and the smaller one will do the laundry work for the family, or the hardest part of it, also the churning.

But to come back to the council of work with my two college girls. Amelia was born to be a private secretary and makes an adorable one. She will take over all household and farm accounts for the summer, also the milk records, and will have charge of the farm and household stores, renewing as needed, and making the daily or weekly memoranda of things required. She will assist me in supervising the dairy, for no ordinary farm hands or even extraordinary ones can be left to their own devices in this day of germs and certified milk.

Angelica is a superior house manager for her

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years and loves the genial, unceasing, and repetitious duties of the home. She will take charge of the household comfort and look after the needs of guests and make up the daily menus. She will also supervise the garden and the fruit-gathering, and help in the canning, jellying, and preserving of the abundant supplies of fruit. Rose will be her loyal assistant, and George the houseman is often able to lend a hand at extra work, being a good cook and handy about all housework. Fortunately, in his own department George needs little supervision, but goes on his noiseless and useful way in a daily routine which leaves the house clean, quiet, cool, and inviting after his accustomed touch has passed over it. I have come to respect the even tenor of his way, and only interrupt his schedule when necessity compels. His chief pleasure is in the coming of guests; not from mercenary motives either, for he feels himself a part of the family and above accepting gratuities except when offered as gifts of friendship. He fairly loves to open the door to new or old friends of the family, help off their coats and wraps, escort them and their luggage to the guests' quarters, and wait at table where nice extra dishes honor the presence of the welcome guest.

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One can overlook some shortcomings when this spirit of hospitality animates the serving members of the household.

JULY SECOND. Everything is moving on wonderfully well. The work is so nicely distributed according to tastes and abilities that none of us feels overburdened, although this is the rush season in the country. The days are so long and hot that we send a lunch to the men at the out-of-door work about half-past ten in the morning and a cooling drink of lemonade or buttermilk, so they come in at noon less exhausted and overhungry.

We have adopted the good old-time noon-day dinner hour, and a siesta for man and beast of an hour or two after dinner, which does away with the best excuse for a late dinner.

My lord and master has his long vacation now, so falls easily into the way of a country dinner time. The council of work assigned him the wood lot as his share in the farm work, knowing his fondness for forestry. And here for three or four hours daily he uses ax and saw and rake in making our little forest more beautiful and useful. We notice master and men, equally, wend homeward with some eagerness when the tuneful farm bell sounds

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the quarter before twelve hour, and by the appetites of all the family I conclude that perhaps the noon hour is not a bad time for dining, but only an inconvenient and unfashionable one for city folks in their tiresome duties of doctoring, lawyering, teaching, buying, and selling.

We have tea at five o'clock under the big walnut tree on the lawn, with everyone free to come or not; and quite often a neighbor comes in at this restful hour. At seven-thirty we have high tea, or supper, on the screened dining-room porch which faces the road. It is lighted with Japanese lanterns at this early twilight hour, and with the fragrance of flowers and the cool evening air is most attractive.

This gives us the beautiful hour of early evening for walking in the garden, lawn, or woods, or reading out of doors, and when the summer night begins to fall we gather for the social hour, at the evening meal, not a hot, heavy supper, but dainty and cooling, yet satisfying and substantial.

At night you can do nothing in the country but sit out of doors and watch the alluring moon and friendly stars, following the lights and shadows among the trees and on the roadway and fields. If you have been faithful, you are too tired to read long or talk much,

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and are ready, but for the exceeding beauty of the night, to lie down to the sleep of the diligent. That sleep is so much a forgetting, an absolute dreamless unconsciousness, that you do not know you have been asleep. You remember only shutting your eyes to the beauty of the night. All else is a blank until the dawn of a new day, in which to work at what Thomas Jefferson called the pursuit of kings, beams in at your windows.

It is a perfectly sane way to live—this busy country life, and I am more than ever in love with it. The hard work makes me sure it is the right way to live. “In the sweat of thy brow” has a deep meaning now as in the beginning. I am suspicious of living which involves no physical labor. This is needed for welfare of mind and soul, as well as for health and long life.

JULY FOURTH. Fireworks are under the ban here. If we are to bring to the country the noise and waste of city life, we are unworthy to dwell here. I don't want the oxen disturbed out of their peaceful calm by nerve-racking firecrackers. I respect the temperament of my faithful domestic animals. The cows would fall off in their milk with an ordinary Fourth of July celebration, and the horses be nervous for

## A COUNTRY WOMAN

a week. We will celebrate joyfully with a neighborhood party to-night, and some city-bound men will come out to meet the college girls. This morning we are to get together an hour or two to read and talk about Dutch influences in the making of our government. We will lunch in the woods, and dine at the Inn where we send the cream daily, and be home for the festivities at eight-thirty this evening.

JULY TWELFTH. One blessing of the country is that there is work here, physical toil, and of the most agreeable and inspiring kind to people with souls. There is never help enough, and always something is crying to be done, so that the veriest idler becomes perforce a worker unless he is hopelessly degenerate. And there is health in it, salvation of body and soul. One of the things the Almighty seems to have kept from the wise and the prudent is the absolute necessity of physical work for the sanity of body and mind. So a multitude of invaluable lives go out before their time, and a greater multitude are wrecks for lack of this great essential. Another class on the wrong road are the millions who grind away at forbidding tasks in vitiated air and with monotonous routine. We need wonder little at the idlers and tramps and in-

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capables who hang on the skirts of society, a dead weight. The appalling monotony of much modern work may well drive average folk to idleness or insanity.

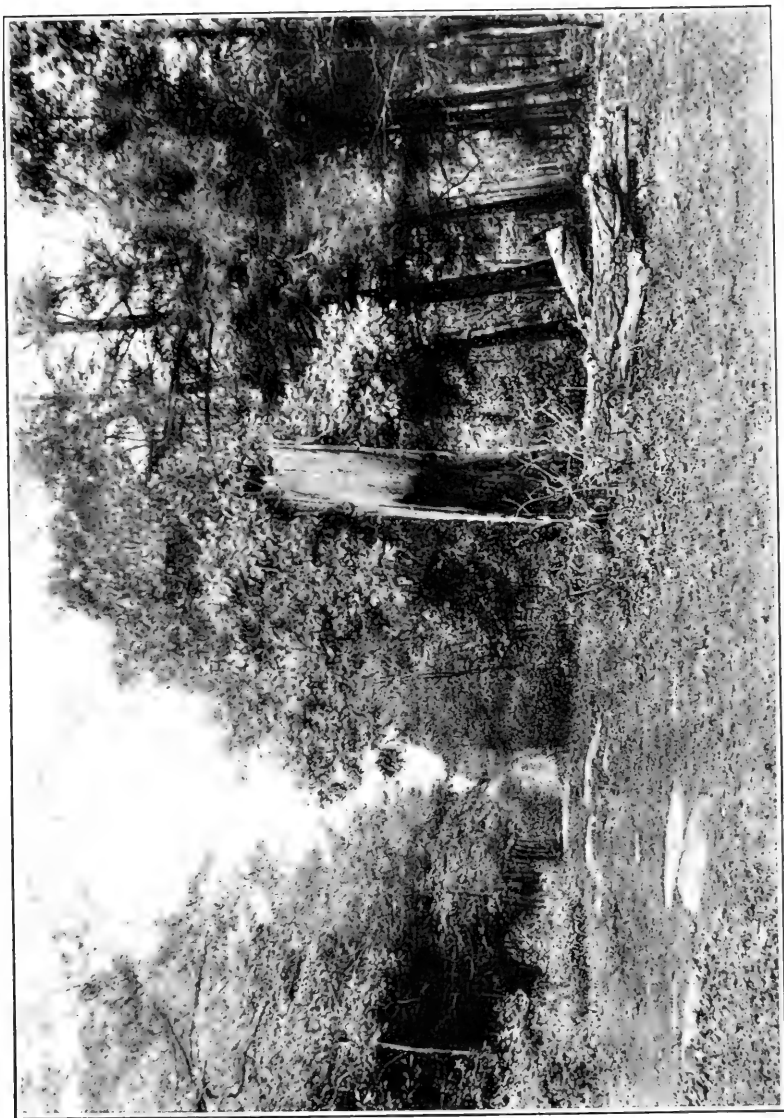
The joy of work we are interested in and which is varied and stimulating cannot be overestimated. It develops the best in us. When men and women owned their own tools and wrought on looms or forges, or in other handicraft ways, putting their best thought and some artistic taste and skill into the product, the joy of work came out in the grace and beauty of the design and execution, and in its durability.

Greater health and happiness is in outdoor rather than indoor work, for here we have the wonderful accompaniments of sky and atmosphere, of fields and woods and flowers, and bird and beast neighbors are never far off.

A few million more of our people ought to be tilling the soil—we should have a happier and healthier population and fewer tramps and idlers.

The delight in outdoor life and the finer and truer feeling for nature are a precious part of the gain of modern life. Work under the open sky and in the sweet-smelling earth or the softly-talking woods, or with the creatures





THE END OF THE ROAD



## A COUNTRY WOMAN

which live among these, is full of healing as well as of inspiration. "Speak to the earth and it shall teach thee," the Good Book says to us, and surely never were lessons more subtly instilled. It is passing strange that so few physicians prescribe work in the ground as a cure, although they have long sent their patients to the outdoor life. Health and vigor of body and mind and renewal of spirit are to be found by entering into working relations with good mother earth. And for that large and growing class of people who keenly realize the conditions of toil or deprivation under which the masses of the world live and struggle, there is satisfaction in vacation weeks and months wherein one renders service to the common life and makes two blades of grass grow where only one grew before. Our contribution may be small, but it is toward the common good, and through it we get close to realities. There is a delicious lonesomeness when one works in the open air, and feels the nearness and gratitude of graceful plants which before our touch were choking with weeds.

The odors of the earth and of the green and growing things minister to health and satisfaction. The too little loved sky waits above us in serene glory when our task permits an

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upward glance. There is harmony in working among the green things of the earth, for plants are purposeful, bent on a kindly mission to mankind. They take their work and play together in sunshine, wind, and rain, and why may not we find health, beauty, and peace while we serve the world? Emerson tells us that "the greatest delight which the fields and woods minister is the suggestion of an occult relation between man and the vegetable. I am not alone and unacknowledged. They nod to me, and I to them."

Perhaps the royal road to mother earth's work cure is through the woods. The woods minister to more subtle needs than the fields and gardens. They temper the atmosphere and bring down the rains, and afford shelter and herbage for the cattle, and by and by they go to make the four walls of home, and enter into the thousand practical uses of life. However, corn and wheat make brain and brawn, so no invidious distinctions may be drawn.

The joy of the woods, however, is surely the ultimate healing power of good Mother Earth. "In the woods," says Emerson, "a man casts off his years. In the woods is perpetual youth. The incommunicable trees begin to persuade us to live with them, and quit our life of solemn

## A COUNTRY WOMAN

trifles. As water to our thirst, so is the rock, the ground, to our eyes and hands and feet—what health, what affinity!”

The woods I know best are not the lonesome forests of great trees and dense shadows. The poet may find “pleasure in the pathless woods,” but the everyday human wants the cheerier woods, where broad spaces of sunlight make patches of green grass to thrive, and a carpet of many hued flowers is spread for our feet. Never such a wood without its brook and springs! In our woods there is a clear pool fed by springs and flowing out to make the brook, which in the driest, hottest seasons never runs dry. Nothing can be more delightful than clearing this brook of sedges and grasses, and drifts of clay and pebbles which choke up its channel.

The delight of outdoor work gets hold of me so strongly sometimes, when my hands are grimy, my back lame, and my head and heart intoxicated with sweet odors of the earth, the grasses and flowers, and overwhelmed by the marvelous bounty of the Creator for man's comfort and health, that I long to open a country colonizing office in town for enlightening city dwellers as to the real joy and profit of living near to nature's heart. Especially

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would I like to make something of this plain to the toilers whose poverty and hard work leave them no time to consider a new and better way of life.

JULY SEVENTEENTH. The days are intensely hot, and one fairly sees the corn growing taller and waving its long green leaves and silken tassels triumphantly in the summer breezes. Corn is to the Eastern what wheat is to the Western farmer—the main and indispensable crop. As the Minnesota and Dakota farmers talk in terms of wheat—wheat weather, wheat conditions, and wheat prices—so our Easterners talk and meditate and almost pray in terms of corn. A big corn crop means prosperity. These moist, hot days insure big ears of yellow corn and heavy fodder from the stalks. Everything else flourishes too under these tropical conditions, but all are incidental to corn, which is a universal food and almost as good a medium of exchange as gold.

The horses sniff and neigh for very gladness when the golden ears are rolling into their feed boxes; the cows straightway increase their milk yield when the yellow cornmeal is mixed bountifully with their mess; corn-fattened pigs are the only fit ones for the market place, and it is the mainstay of chickens in their efforts to





THE OLDEST HOUSES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD



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provide a wholesome breakfast for the world. As for us humans, corn feeds us directly as well as indirectly in many forms.

To-day George the Slav brought in two or three well-grown though immature ears of corn and held them up for our admiring eyes. They certainly give promise of a record crop if weather conditions remain favorable. George takes most of the credit to himself and deserves a good deal, for successful corn means diligence in business.

JULY TWENTY-FIRST. There is great rejoicing, for one of my intimate friends has rented the oldest house in the neighborhood for a summer home. It was built about 1700 and has a glorious, deep fireplace and a well of water fit for the gods. My friend, Martha by name, writes poetry and prose, and this is a place in which to see visions and dream dreams. She has taken the quaint old place for three years and will make it comfortable and attractive with a little effort and expense. Angelica and Amelia are helping her renovate and settle it and astonish me daily with tales of wonders accomplished. It will be such a happiness to have our circle increased by this congenial friend, who will mix into the neighborhood as happily as we have. We celebrated by asking

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a few neighbors to meet her at a picnic on the Palisades, all of us going on foot from choice, by way of the mountain boulevard after a climb to that delectable road. George the houseman came after in dignified state with a wagon and the provisions. It was a heavenly day and bound us all together in joyful appreciation of each other and of our happy fate to live among the glories and graces of kindly nature. The day's success was due to Martha chiefly, to her charm and her joy in finding the true life. She will stay late in the country and come back early, and I doubt not songs in the night will be hers and day dreams to weave into verses for those who must take their joy in nature second-hand.

JULY TWENTY-SEVENTH. We begin to know people for five miles round about. The minister of the little village church—my grandfather's church, for he built and mostly maintained it for fifty years—was, of course, one of our first friends. Then we found an ideal country doctor who cures mostly by suggestion, with incidental prescriptions of baths, exercise, and much sleep. He became at once a valued friend of the family, but with the assurance that we were hopelessly well and his calls would need to be friendly visits.





PARLOR CUPBOARD OF AN OLD DUTCH FARMHOUSE IN THE NEARBY VILLAGE.  
A REAL HOLLAND INTERIOR

## A COUNTRY WOMAN

Then our immediate neighbors have proved so satisfying. They welcomed us, and were delighted to find an open door at our home, where a thought for the general weal of the community was taken and some practical way opened for them to come into social and personal contact with one another a little more freely. The arts and crafts rooms are a meeting place of unending interest, and a reason for frequent and prolonged comings of neighbors, assured that here is a welcome and work for those who wish, and fellowship of kindred minds.

I am weaving some rag carpet rugs in attractive patterns, and Amelia is also an adept at the loom. One of our oldest neighbors has revived her skill at coloring cloth in vegetable dyes, and such wonderfully soft and artistic and lasting blues and greens and browns and purples as she brings out of the dye pot delight our eyes and insure the beauty of our rugs. Amelia is teaching two neighbors, young married women, to weave, and three or four older women sew the carpet rags at their homes, using much of the artistic dyed cloth with their own pieces, and bringing them in pound balls, on our social afternoons, as their contribution to the neighborhood arts and crafts work. We are

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working at other crafts a little, and talking over plans to make our work profitable, and so to extend our art industries. The winter will be the season to work out the problems of the social and crafts side of our lives. Now the wonderful outdoor world claims us most of the time, and we visit each other's gardens, and inspect the cows and other animals, and go on picnic excursions or on fishing parties in the little leisure of our busy days.

JULY THIRTY-FIRST. I pitched my camp near the site of the little old red house of my childhood days. Here by the spring, under the shade mellowed by sunlight, we had two tents put up on good solid floors—oblong tents, which seemed like little cottages, with their flapping doors of canvas. Good couches and just furnishings enough to make a temporary home for two or three people, and my camp was done, for Dame Nature had made the setting more beautiful than hand of man could ever work out, and we have only to accept her gift.

Most people, including my lord and master, naturally thought we were sufficiently ruralized without going into camp. But a country home is a place of such varied activities and interests and incoming and outgoing people that I knew full well there would be joy in a tented retreat

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under the starry skies and with delicious sounds from brook and trees the only noises; hence my camp. It has been and promises to be an endless source of peace and pleasure. I can lie on my couch and watch the stars in their courses, and wave a greeting to the man in the moon. Or in these hot, busy days, a long siesta far from the house and its inevitable duties, is restful beyond words.

Another use I intend for the camp is to offer it a week at a time, now and then, to people who never get into the country and who need it sadly. A young clergyman and his wife, from a small downtown church, are coming next week to enjoy it, and later two or three clerks who never know how to get a little rest and pleasure from their brief vacation; from here they can go on day outings to lovely spots and at night be refreshed by sleeping practically out of doors.

AUGUST THIRD. To-day we had sweet corn from the garden for dinner, and will have a lettuce and cauliflower salad for supper. The lima beans are coming on, while the early cabbages and white turnips we are using right along, as well as string beans and beets. Harvest apples and old-fashioned bell pears are the chief fruits, now that the berry season is

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over. But I must not forget the huckleberries which sturdy boys and girls gather on the mountainside and bring to our door two or three times a week. If there is anything better than huckleberry pie in the pie line, I have yet to discover it. Angelica is canning a lot of the berries for winter use.

The wonder of it all is this succession of fruits and vegetables, each month furnishing new and delicious kinds, beginning with spinach and asparagus in early spring and running through until late fall. Then for fear man might suffer lack in the long winter months, certain vegetables and fruits are good keepers, and being stored in a suitable place they give fresh food all winter.

When you live and work in the country it is so easy to believe that God planted a garden for man's sustenance and delight, and so impossible to comprehend the attitude of people who think all these wonderful laws and bountiful provisions of nature come by chance or without a lawgiver and creator.

AUGUST FOURTH. I worked in the garden an hour before breakfast this morning, which I try to do three or four days in the week for the garden's sake and my own. It is so still and sweet and dewy there at six o'clock. The



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earth is like our friends, the more we cultivate it the closer and more delightful our relations become. It leaves no kindnesses unreturned. It heaps favors on us after its own kind and its silences speak to the comprehending heart.

One feels like continually singing praises in the garden, the fields, and woods, and under the open sky, and since the foundation of the world men have sung praises and uttered thanksgiving for the marvelous bounty of the earth. The Psalmist seems to confirm our intimations that even inanimate nature is full of joy and praises when he sings: "Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice."

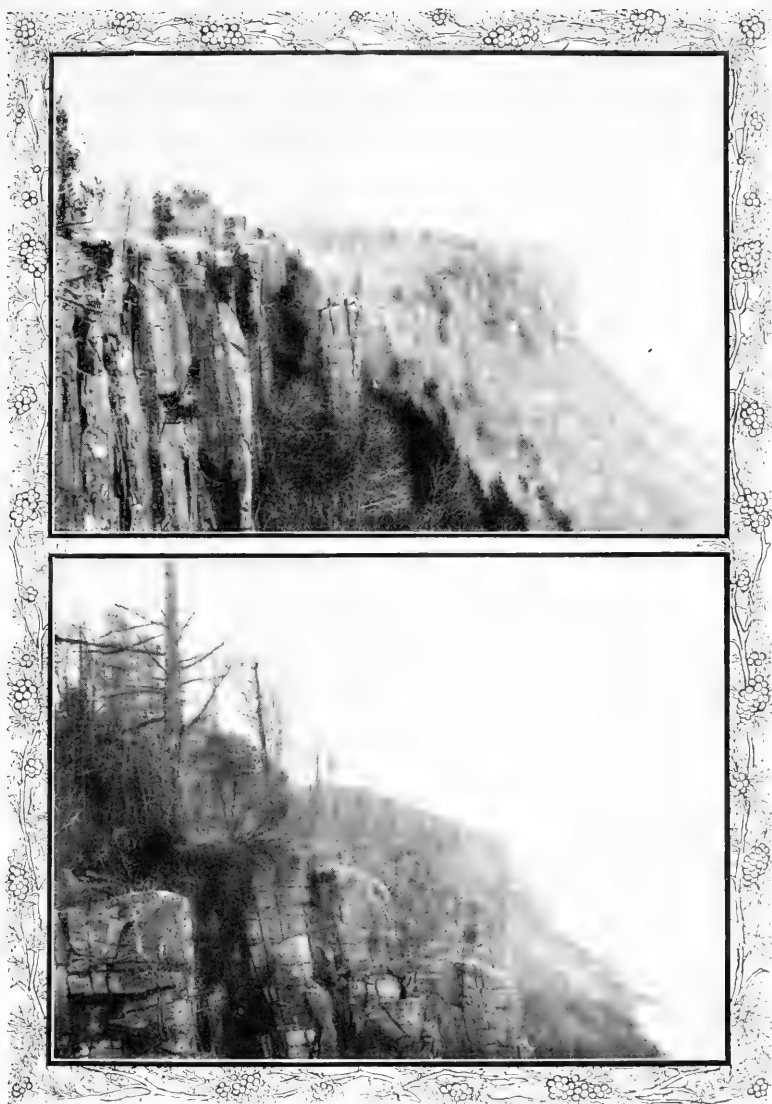
I cut a basket of flowers before going in to breakfast, and so closes one of the happiest hours of the day. It is health-giving too, that early morning hour of sunshine and fragrance and contact with the earth and her fruits. Things seem clear and easy in the strength of the new day which were perplexing and worrisome the night before. I think it might be a cure for nervous people, an early hour in the garden, only, poor souls, they never seem to have the will and energy to get up early, even though their chief trouble is sleeplessness. Keeping well is my particular hobby, for obser-

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vation has convinced me it is far easier than getting oneself mended after a breakdown.

AUGUST FIFTH. This was our picnic day. We have one every week, generally on Saturday afternoons. We cook our supper in the open and stay late to enjoy the moonlight when the moon shines, and the friendly and more constant stars. Sometimes we go to the top of the Palisades, sometimes to the foot of that mighty bulwark, beside the broad river, but very often to our camp near the spring or to a neighboring woods.

The coffee-pot and broiler and a pot to boil potatoes with the skins on are the important features of the outfit. The provisions have to be bountiful, for out-of-door appetites are remarkable. George the houseman always goes with us as chief fireman and helper, and two of the party cook and serve the supper. Our poet friend Martha goes with us and one or two neighbors, and whoever chance to be our guests for the week end. So we have simply happy, witching hours of talk and song and jollity until the darkness begins to gather thick and the stars come out while we sit around the glowing fire and fall into the quiet mood that seems to fit the evening hour and the close of the working week.



THE TOP OF THE PALISADES



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AUGUST SIXTH. It is one of those Sunday mornings when the whole earth seems to be uttering forth the glory of the visible and the invisible, when to be alive is a joy. Cloudless blue sky overarches the green and blooming earth. The atmosphere is clear and vibrant. A heavenly peace seems brooding over everything as in the time before man toiled and moiled to keep body and spirit together.

Sunday in the country is the crown of living. The stillness is a revelation. The busy grind of everyday life ceases, except just the necessary work, and men and animals have a quiet, restful air, different from their weekday look.

We all go to church in the morning and our guests with us. Our ancestors hereabouts, the genial Dutch folks, went piously to church services lasting most of the day. They took a lunch, and in winter a footstove, and were edified by lengthy prayers and sermons, and cheered by the neighborly intercourse at noon-time. The spiritual side of life is as conscious in us as in them, and perhaps as dominant, although we have changed our customs of churchgoing to shorter hours and shorter sermons and prayers.

Churchgoing in the country is far less regular than of old, and the influence of the church

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less. Perhaps it is because there are so many open doors to the spiritual life nowadays. It is just as true of the cities, and perplexes thoughtful and religious people everywhere. But if we try to solve all the problems and remedy all the ills of modern life, we shall not have time to till the soil or keep house. We try, indeed, to do our share in the effort to understand conditions and help bring in the kingdom. Here in the country I haven't got much farther than just to do, myself, and try to have my family do, what we think is right and best for us, to set an example of going ourselves regularly to church and inviting our neighbors when a suitable opportunity occurs. We take the same attitude so far in community social and political affairs, which suffer just as the church does for lack of the people's coöperation.

AUGUST FIFTEENTH. This is the farmer's vacation time, a little cessation of urgent work, an interval between the gathering of early and later crops. One almost has the sensation of a real vacation. There is still enough to do in the care of stock and other regular work, but now we can have the men a few hours daily for such extra things as have waited for this time of comparative leisure. I am having them set out some evergreens as

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a windbreak on the north side of the barn, and small clumps of them in two or three other places. I don't want many, for they seem not to belong to this old-time place. The fences are being looked after a little, the spring cleaned out, and wood brought from the wood lot, where the foresting has gone on these weeks past.

It is such a satisfaction to be partially independent of the coal trust, and we look forward to the early autumn evenings when the open fireplaces with our own wood will cheer and warm us. We put in a kitchen range which burns both coal and wood, and a furnace of the same kind. The latter easily takes cordwood sawed in two pieces. Wood gives out a delicious, odorous warmth, and the food cooked over wood fires has a different and finer flavor.

AUGUST TWENTY-FIRST. Angelica has made so much jelly and jam and canned such a quantity of fruit with the combined help of the family that we had to put up a new fruit shelf in the cellar room devoted to food. The fruit looks beautiful and samples of each kind at our porch suppers proclaimed them perfect.

Angelica is becoming a notable housekeeper, and I have to warn some of our guests that she

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has three years yet in college. Several romances have been weaving themselves during the summer, as is inevitable where young people are coming and going. What a blind thing it is, this meeting and wooing and wedding! It is not only Cupid who is blind, but the young people most intimately concerned in the romances. The best safeguards for reasonable happiness in the natural ending which some of these romances are sure to have is that youth should be trained to unselfishness, self-control, self-reliance, and industry.

Just now I am thinking pretty seriously on these questions, for something really tragic is going on under our very eyes, and one's powerlessness to help is so apparent. In crises of life very little help outside ourselves is possible. We stand alone. No one can decide for us.

The little tragedy which has shadowed our gayest and busiest days a bit concerns a charming young girl, one of Amelia's earliest and closest friends, and a great favorite with us all, who came out to us in a gale of trouble three weeks ago. The child has been educated in fashionable schools and has all the graces and accomplishments. Usually she is the merriest of them all, dancing, singing, walking, and



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talking as care-free and happy as the birds on the wing. Her home for years has been with distant relatives in the city, where she is entirely one of the family and where she has shared all the advantages of education and accomplishments enjoyed by her young relatives, although her patrimony is very small.

She is a dear and attractive girl, and quite naturally the eldest son of the family fell in love with her. No sudden thing, to be sure, but by constant association at home, and continual choosing of Cornelia to take everywhere to their young circle's entertainments, and to confide all his hopes and ambitions to, there has grown up one of those devoted companionships which are the surest presage of a happy future together. There was no formal engagement announced, but everyone knew they were bound up in each other.

In an unfortunate moment Cornelia overheard Raymond's parents regretting that their eldest and very promising son should not marry a young woman with some fortune. The poor innocent folks are wealthy themselves and have a large family and know how handily money comes in to oil the wheels of material existence. It was only a little human regret, and with no intention of interfering with their

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son's happiness. But this high-strung young piece renounced her lover forthwith, and fled to find balm in the peaceful country and with old friends, leaving a man stunned and heart-sick over her folly and pride, protesting with all his soul against the cruelty of making him the victim of some chance words and innocent regrets.

SEPTEMBER FIFTH. Few hints as yet of real autumn, but the fullness of summer everywhere. The ripened corn awaits the sickle and the apple trees hang loaded with red-cheeked apples, soon to be picked and stored for winter use.

The fields are only a shade less richly green than in July, and the woods are but just beginning to put on the yellows and browns and soft reds of autumn. The busy season has commenced again on the farm, for now the corn must be cut, and later husked and the stalks stacked. Apples and pears are being picked and sorted. The potatoes were dug this week and turned out well, smooth, and good sized. We will store enough for the year, until the next crop ripens, and have fifty bushels to sell, and thirty bushels of very small ones to feed to the chickens and pigs. For this purpose we boil them in a big iron pot, generally out of

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doors, and stir in several quarts of wheat bran or cracked corn or cornmeal. The fowls rejoice in this tasteful mixture, and the pigs are vociferous over it. This is what Irish Rose calls "stir-about," and a much-used feed in old Ireland. Then the chickens like cabbages very much, and the poorer heads from our small field will be stored separately, under a bank of straw and earth to keep for use in feeding them during the winter. Fasten one on a nail or hook within their reach and an eager crowd gathers around and picks the tender white cabbage heart out in short meter.

I haven't spoken of our chickens and pigs before, on the theory of leaving the best to the last. The chickens are a dream. Thoroughbred black Minorcas, Rhode Island reds, and barred Plymouth Rocks; too many varieties for a small place, I admit. But we got them in our inexperience, and now are too attached to each kind to give any of them up. They are all so excellent and beautiful, each kind with its dominant virtues, and seeming to outvie each other in the number and size of the eggs they lay. Without undue favoritism, I may mention the beauty and lordly airs of the black Minorca cocks, and the immensity and whiteness of the Minorca hen's eggs. They never

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stop to hatch out and bring up a family, but keep right on laying as if they realized the consuming power of the human family for fresh-laid eggs.

SEPTEMBER THIRTEENTH. I do not believe much in unlucky numbers and days, but certainly this day bears out the reputation of the number thirteen. Not that ill luck has befallen the farm or its interests. No, all things work together for those who love nature and God, but one can't say as much for those who love man—a man, to put it more definitely.

Dear Cornelia! poor Cornelia! This reminds me of my dear mother, who always expressed her gentle, heartfelt sympathy by the word "poor," "poor Louise," "poor dear Georgie," even when these children of her heart were but lightly in difficulties.

I might write a week and yet not convey the agitation, distress, and sympathy which have moved our household over the crisis in Cornelia's affairs. There has been weeping and pretty nearly gnashing of teeth, for it is all so maddening in that we can only look on and follow the lead of a young girl. It is a month since she came to us, troubled and forlorn, having left her lover in anger. The nice, refined country schoolmaster here has been

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among her devotees since she came. He is much older than she, quiet, kindly, but utterly unworldly and unfitted to cope with the bread-and-butter problem of a household. His total salary as a country teacher about equals Cornelia's fairly modest allowance for clothes and sundries. He is rather good-looking and very sympathetic, and fell deeply in love with our charming Cornelia. Angelica, who has discernment, warned us there was danger, but I was totally unprepared for Cornelia's announcement a week ago of her engagement to him. I nearly fainted, which is a good deal for a farmer. I begged, pleaded, commanded her to cease her folly, but all to no purpose. It is pique in part, I am sure, but the tender sympathy and really earnest, attractive nature of the school-teacher has won her regard, and not wanting to return to her old home, which is her lover's home, nor having any plan in life, now that the old love is off, the poor child cuts the knot by accepting the schoolmaster. She only consented after much urging to go to the city and see her uncle and aunt, who are her guardians. In her inmost heart she doubtless hoped that some readjustment might come with her lover, and I was sure of it. They were in despair over her hasty action, and al-

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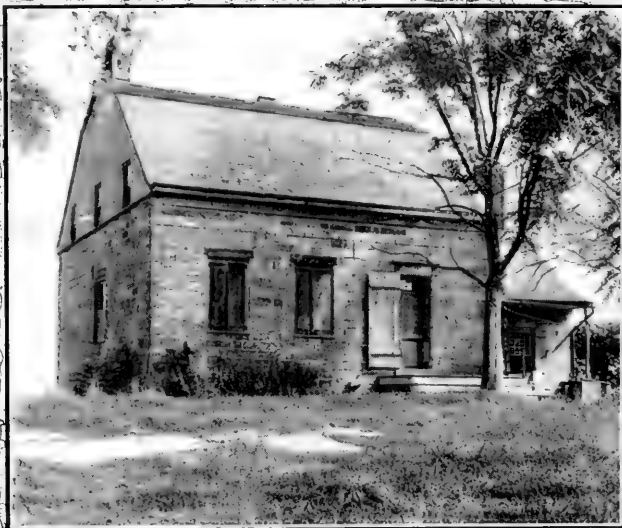
most forbade her marriage to the schoolmaster, knowing her unfitness for a poor country school-teacher's wife. They begged her to take more time to decide.

Raymond was absent on business, but returned before Cornelia left, and I fancy the meeting was tragic. In the joy of seeing each other they forgot for a moment their bitter parting and their grief, and fell into each other's arms in true lovers' fashion. Poor little Cornelia swallowed her pride and begged him to forget her hasty action and offered to break her engagement with the schoolmaster.

Then, alas! that awful sense of justice in youth spoke up, and vowing that he loved her utterly and would to the end of his life, he absolutely refused to have her break the engagement, declaring he would not cause another man to suffer what he is suffering. And there it ended.

Cornelia came back to the country with shining eyes and a determined mouth. No wisdom of the ages or the sages could have moved her, and to-day at sundown she was married to the schoolmaster on our lawn under the walnut trees. Our family and the friendliest neighbors gathered there. The schoolmaster is almost the last of an old Dutch family and





THE SCHOOLMASTER'S ANCESTRAL HOME. THE CENTURY-AND-A-HALF  
OLD INN



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had no kindred to come. Cornelia did not want her family friends, and asked only two or three intimate girl friends from the city.

We made it as gay and beautiful as we could, and a fairer bride were hard to find, and the young girls in their filmy gowns made it quite a fairy scene.

They are to live in the schoolmaster's ancestral home, a mile distant from us, and as the twilight faded and the moon shone and the stars came out the young husband and wife walked hand in hand to their new, old home, surrounded by the galaxy of lovely girls who bade them good-by and Godspeed at their wreath-hung old Dutch door.

The old house was made quite a bower of beauty by Amelia and Angelica, assisted by our household force. Cornelia herself seemed to take little interest. She swung in the hammock on our porch, listless and dreamy, while the old house was scoured and dainty curtains put up, rugs put down, the few pieces of fine old furniture belonging to the schoolmaster, rubbed up and put in place, and Cornelia's few belongings saved from her dead mother's treasures, adjusted to their new environment. Then the few but choice and useful wedding gifts were disposed to advantage, the great fireplace

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piled with logs, the iron andirons brought from the attic, and everywhere flowers and wreaths of green.

George, our houseman, was there to light the candles and the hearth fire before the bride came home, and will stay a day or two to light the kitchen fire and keep house until the little lady takes up her life task in her quaint old home.

The schoolmaster bought a cow and some chickens, which will pay their own way. A horse and carriage are not for poor people, but the walking is good on our country roads, and there are delightful walks. School opening is postponed a week for the wedding, so Cornelia will not be alone in beginning the new life. She is to spend a day in each week with us, and we shall go to her as often as we can.

When the girls came back we were sitting in the moonlight still, amid the wedding wreaths, talking of youth and love and life—so mysterious and so blessed. Some one was playing weird, sad airs on the flute. All our gayety had vanished. The girls strayed a little from us and sat in a circle on the grassy slope, their arms intertwined, and not a word from them. I suspect there were some wet eyes and sympathetic hand-clasps.

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SEPTEMBER TWENTY-EIGHTH. It has been a month of perfect days, the crowning glory of a beautiful summer. The harvests are garnered and the clear, cool evenings remind us of a new season's coming. But so gently has the change come, so softly the September breezes have blown the tinted leaves from the trees, and so hot and summery are the midday hours that one hardly realizes the subtle change going on. Then nature is so abundant in her September gifts, and flowers and fruits and vegetables were never more abundant. The early varieties are gone, but from now on until late October we shall have luscious grapes, rosy-cheeked apples, golden pears, and plenty of flowers and vegetables of the hardier kinds.

The spacious cellar begins to look like its old-time self. A wagon-load of dropped apples was taken to the mill last week and brought back as cider to be preserved for winter use. Boxes of sand and loam to hold the winter celery, carrots, parsnips, onions, beets, and turnips have been put in place. Pears and the choicest apples were picked, wrapped in paper and stored in barrels, leaving an abundant supply out of doors, even after selling a quantity.

The corn has been husked and brought in,

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while the stalks stand in great shocks, to be later stacked beside the barn. The nut trees are loaded and after heavier frosts we shall have nutting parties to gather in a store for winter use.

The gentle oxen are carting our winter wood from the wood lot, and great piles of it have been sawed and piled ready for use. How rich we are! It seems almost wicked to use the good things of the garden, orchard, and forest as freely as we do. The narrow pinching of many thousands of refined people in the city and the real poverty of others enjoins upon us care of the bounties lying all about us, that there shall not be waste. In spite of this and of the fact that hearty chickens and pigs await the surplus of garden and orchard with impatience, one feels like summoning gentle people to enjoy the fruits and vegetables and flowers that seem to produce an hundredfold and load us with good things.

SEPTEMBER THIRTIETH. Yesterday Amelia and Angelica returned to college, leaving us lonely enough. The summer's work and play had made them hardy and happy. We shall all be together again for two or three weeks at the holiday season, when we are to have a house party with as many friends coming as we

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can store away in the Old Homestead. And then how the big logs will burn in the great fireplace, and the home-made candles light us merrily about the quaint old house, and to the cellar to bring forth the good things now being stored there!

Candle-making was a very interesting process, for which we called in the assistance of two old gentlewomen of the neighborhood who had made them in years gone by and had kept the molds. I remember seeing them made here when I was a very little girl, and I have always kept one of the old candle-molds in the hope that I might some day use it. Our work turned out successfully and we have a chest of four hundred candles in the attic which will light our ways during the year. We can turn on the electric light at the stables and on the porch, and even in the house on a pinch, but everyone scorns to use it in the country where there are candles and moonlight and starlight. We are in the country partly to get back the poetry of living.

Something new is happening all the time, and the most exhilarating place I know of is a farm. We no more than had Cornelia settled with her schoolmaster in his quaint ancestral home, than George the Slav announced that

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his wife and children were coming from the old country. What to do with them became the question of the hour. George was helpless and looked to me to provide a place. He had not wanted them to come, knowing they were comfortably fixed at home and his fifteen-year-old boy earning fair wages with a farmer there. But a Slav woman in the nearby town, through whom George has transacted such business as he has, as sending money home and the like, sent word to his wife that George was paying attention to a young Slav woman and she would better come to America. George scornfully avers that he has not seen the young woman for two years, and looks deeply worried as to the future home he is to set up.

"Me no place for wife and children," mutters George every day, and seeing the puckers on his brow and the trouble in his eyes, I sallied forth in search of a home for the newcomers. Fortunately, I was able to rent a little, old cottage on a neighboring farm for four dollars a month, and we are sending over a stove not in use, and some necessary furnishings, so that Mrs. George the Slav will not be homeless on her arrival in this hospitable land.

I am opposed to all immigration to our country for the next fifty years, believing we have

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more foreigners now than can be properly Americanized, but this is an accomplished fact, and at least they will settle in the country. It meant either George must leave us and try to take care of his family in the overcrowded city, away from the only work he knows, or we must help him shoulder the burden here. They can dispose of some of our surplus fruit and vegetables and wood, and the wife doubtless will be a good worker and find plenty of work to do here and there in the neighborhood.

OCTOBER FIFTH. The leisure I hoped to find, but which was a rare thing in the summer, is one of the joys of this autumn time—leisure to read, to study, to write, to think, to see and enjoy my friends, and even to loaf. Two or three hours a day of work and supervision out of doors and in, and the other twelve or fourteen waking hours are reasonably free. We have all been so diligent this summer, doing the work needed to be done in season, that now the time of rest and change to other congenial occupations is really here, stretching all through the quiet fall and winter months if we could but tarry here, and promising joy and mental and spiritual renewal.

At least we shall stay until after Thanksgiving and come back for the holiday season;

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but necessity seems to point to a few months in town, so we shall make a virtue of necessity. In these golden autumn days I am having long walks and talks with Martha, our poet, and we are reading together—the very latest novels and poetry, a luxury I only had time for snatches of before. The very spirit of our own time must breathe in the best of these, and they take us out of the practical into the ideal world for a little while. Then for our solitary hours we take up whatever line of reading or study fits into our individual schemes of work. The habit of early rising gives me long morning hours when the mind is freshest and most alert. The afternoons are mostly for social and neighborhood life and to work out our arts and crafts plans with the coöperation of the neighbors.

Cornelia is proving my loyal helper, now that Amelia and Angelica have gone back to college, and comes twice a week to help in the weaving and other handicrafts, and to cheer us with her music. With the marvelous adaptability of the American girl she has taken up her new life courageously, and tries to find peace and content in the new duties and to give pleasure to all whom she meets. With her I can leave the social and crafts work



## A COUNTRY WOMAN

I have begun, during the winter season when I must be away, and so my problems get themselves solved as they arise. If we are obedient to our visions, the ability and opportunity to do the things we dream of is sure to follow.

OCTOBER EIGHTH. To-day we began an historical pilgrimage which is to be continued on fair days until the weather is too cold for pleasure in it. It is a pilgrimage of our county, one of the most historic in the Union, and beautiful and picturesque as well. Here the cheery Dutch settlers landed and explored and made settlements before the Puritans ever sighted their barren New England coast. Here they developed a tolerant, peaceful, and prosperous civilization, whose ancient homesteads still set forth the stability and honesty and love of beauty of their builders and founders. Here they helped to put the progressive ideas of their homeland into the fundamental law of their adopted country. Here battles of the Revolution were fought and tragic events connected with it occurred, and here through all the years the development of agriculture and of the arts and industries have gone on, so that our county is a world in itself and one to be proud of and to love.

It is a happiness to know well and love

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some particular little portion of our great land as well as to cherish a patriotic pride and affection for the entire country in all its grandeur and achievement. Few things are finer in human nature than this clinging to native places and contributing, if we may, to their well-being.

On our pilgrimage we mean to gather records and books and maps and pictures of places and events to keep in the Old Homestead, for our own use and satisfaction and for the neighborhood people, who are unlikely to make much use of the county historical society collections. From the scattered ancient houses we may pick up reminiscences and traditions from descendants of the earlier times, and perhaps some furniture of the forefathers.

I shall be as much interested in the old stone houses, ancient stone kitchens, colonial Dutch doorways, and roofs, old looms and brass and delft ware, bedspreads and homespun linen, as in the places of the first settlements, or Washington's headquarters and the route of marching Revolutionary soldiers, or the place where André met his tragic fate.

OCTOBER TWELFTH. A doubting friend has written me that I never said anything about the

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dark side of country life! But have I not persistently affirmed that foresight and hard work are prime elements of country life? This with the uncertainty of the seasons and its effect on crops, the multitude of insect pests, seeking a living as we are out of the fruits of the earth, occasional sickness and death among our flocks and herds and the difficulty of getting competent farm help—these are what I would say constitute the difficult but not the dark side of country life. There is no dark side unless one happens to go in beyond his depth financially, but this is not peculiar to farm life, and less fatal to it than to some other kinds of business. To get joy out of country life one wants to plan and work and live well within one's means.

I have not dwelt much on my difficulties, knowing that everyone has plenty of his own to draw upon. The occasional failures in crops, partly due to Providence and partly to George the Slav, I have left unrecorded. It has been a summer rich in delights, sitting at the feet of Nature and learning her marvelous ways, not rich through the harvests and the increase in our live stock, though they have done their best ungrudgingly.

However, my account books, kept in Amelia's clear handwriting for the most of the season,

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are not bad reading, and I do not hesitate to put down here some results of my farming experiment.

This is what we sold or used from April first to October first, and the cows did not really become domiciled and at their best until well along in April.

1700 qts. cream at .22 .....	\$374.00
83 doz. eggs at .28 .....	23.24
90 lbs. spring chk. at .25 .....	22.50
120 lbs. fowl at .18 .....	21.60
320 lbs. young pork at .11 .....	35.20
250 lbs. pork at .10 .....	25.00
30 baskets Bartlett pears at .60 .....	18.00
12 barrels apples at 2.50 .....	30.00
Tomatoes, beans, early cabbages .....	15.70
50 bu. potatoes at .65 .....	32.50
2 calves .....	20.70
360 qts. milk at .06 .....	21.60
40 lbs. butter at .30 .....	12.00

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Total sold.....\$652.04

180 pts. cream at .11 .....	\$19.80
110 doz. eggs at .28 .....	30.80
120 lbs. spring chk. at .25 .....	30.00
55 lbs. fowl at .18 .....	9.90
Vegetables, estimated .....	47.00
Fruit, estimated .....	61.00
360 qts. milk at .06 .....	21.60
77 lbs. butter at .30 .....	23.10

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Total used.....\$243.20

Grand total.....\$895.24

Comparing income and expenditures, and es-

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timating the use of the homestead as equivalent to the interest on the investment in the place, I find that the returns from the farm, garden, and stock covered cost of outdoor labor, cost of seed, fertilizers, poultry and stock feed, interest on stock and equipment, taxes, and insurance.

The returns of a higher kind, which cannot be counted up in figures, must not be forgotten. Now when the leaves have turned and "the frost is on the pumpkin," reminders come of the beaten track and the necessity of going back to it. But what treasure we have found and will take with us to the more intense and richly human life of the city! The vital, active, real life of the country has been a renewal of the whole being. You waken mornings conscious of joy in being alive, and of the need of your particular services in the scheme of things. You have stored up youth and strength from the eternal youth and vigor of mother earth and her uprising children, and feel really able to remove mountains—a power you had hitherto looked upon as scripture hyperbole. You sleep because you are sleepy, needing no powders; eat to satisfy real hunger, though no tonic has built up the appetite. Every kind of exercise through work has renewed you,

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without patent apparatus to help through a tiresome round.

Best of all, you realize health and joy in living as the normal condition, and dependent upon the relation of man to the earth and the animal kingdom which was fixed at the beginning of things and may not be changed permanently but with loss physical and spiritual.

What Walt Whitman said of American democracy applies to the individuals who make up the democracy—that it “must either be fibered, vitalized, by regular contact with outdoor light and air and growths, farm scenes, animals, fields, trees, birds, sun-warmth, and free skies, or it will morbidly dwindle and pale.” There is a blazing log fire on the hearth this cool October day, and the whispering tongues of flame invite us appealingly to often journey countryward in winter days and find what delights the country in winter has for people with souls.

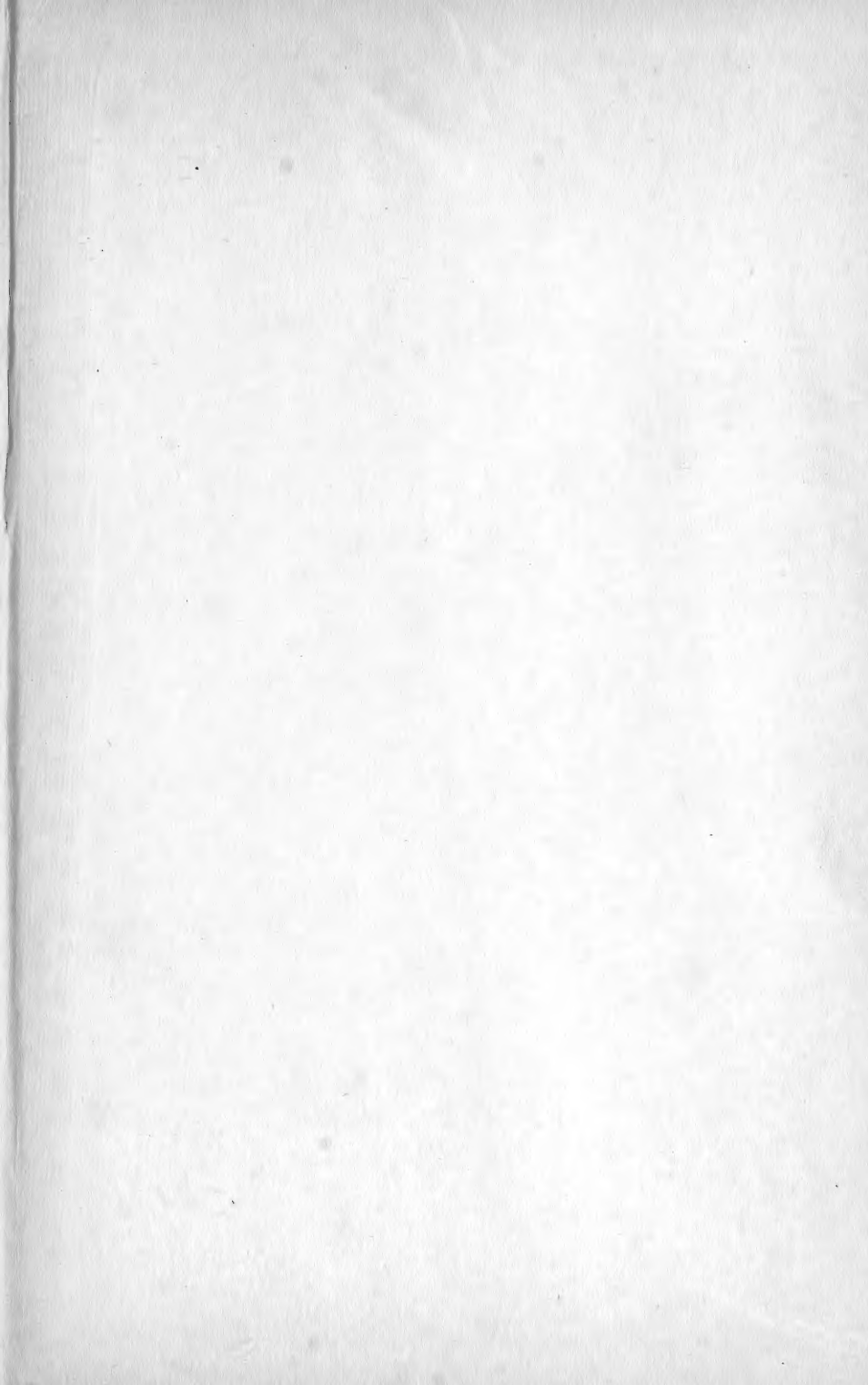








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